

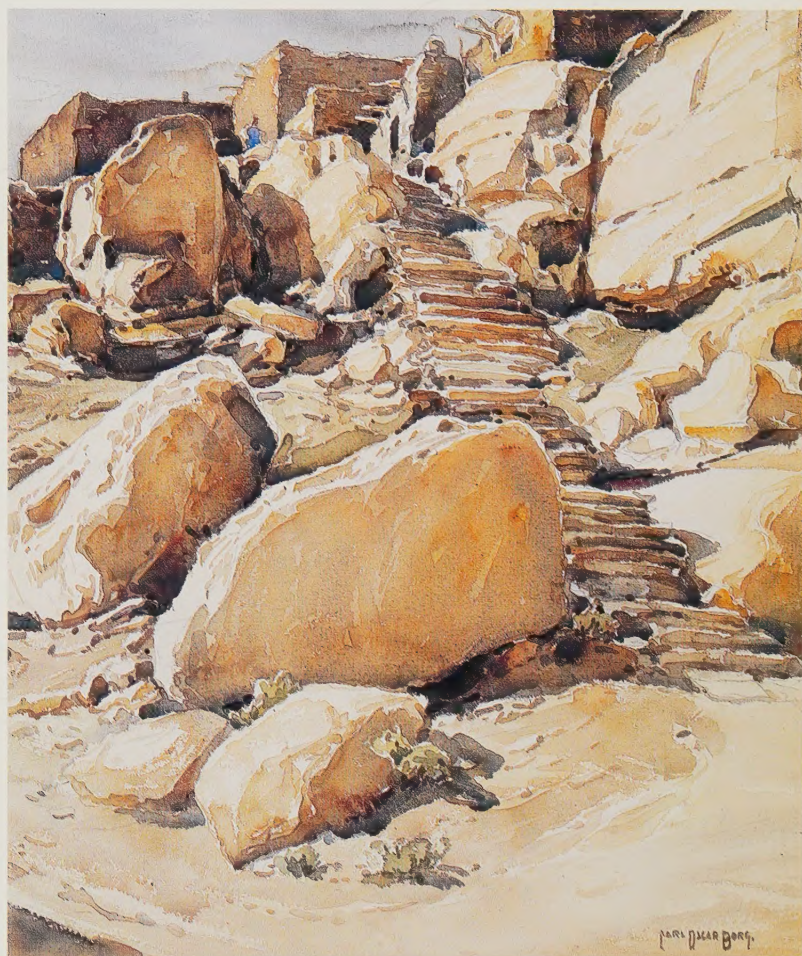
CARL OSCAR  
**BORG**

*A Niche in Time*

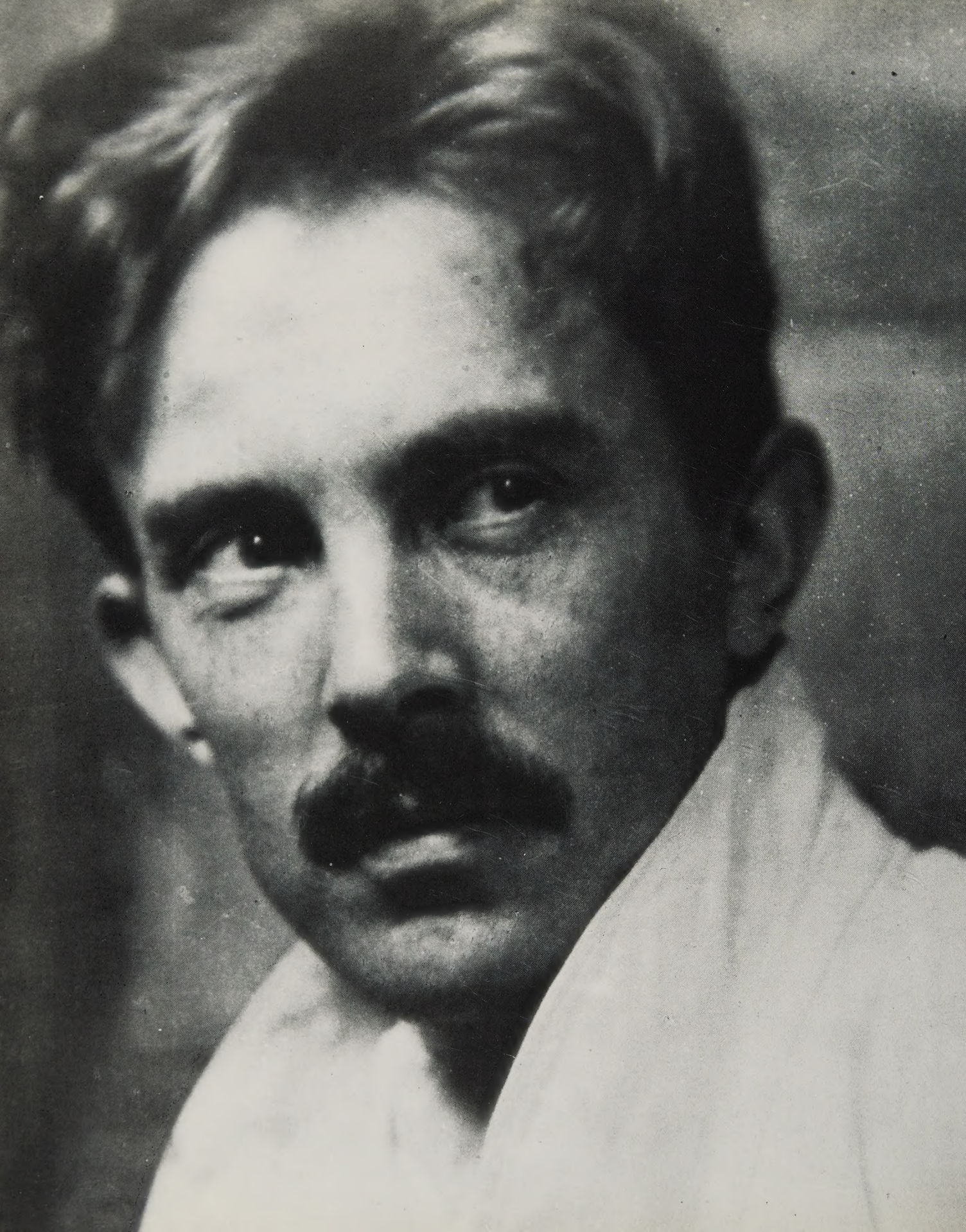
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*Essays by*  
Katherine Plake Hough  
Michael R. Grauer  
Helen Laird

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY SAN DIEGO c.1

CARL OSCAR  
**BORG**

*A Niche in Time*

Palm Springs Desert Museum  
Palm Springs, California



DESERT SHADOWS. 1925

*oil on canvas*

36 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 40 inches

Collection of Charles and Julie Coffman

Photography by Janice Felgar

CANYON DE CHELLY. 1917

*oil on canvas*

49 x 40 inches

Courtesy of Mongerson Wunderlich Gal-  
leries, Chicago









CARL OSCAR BORG: A NICHE IN TIME

Palm Springs Desert Museum  
Palm Springs, California  
January 6–March 18, 1990

Santa Barbara Historical Museum  
Santa Barbara, California  
April 8–June 3, 1990

Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum  
Canyon, Texas  
June 24–August 18, 1990

Phoenix Art Museum  
Phoenix, Arizona  
September 9–November 4, 1990

Gilcrease Museum  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
November 18, 1990–January 20, 1991

Cover: THE NIMAN KACHINAS. 1926  
*oil on canvas, 47 x 54 inches*  
*The Anschutz Collection*

Page 1: STEPS TO ACOMA  
*watercolor on paper, 18 1/2 x 15 3/4 inches*  
*Eugene B. Adkins Collection*

Page 2: Carl Oscar Borg. 1925  
*Photography by W. Edwin Gledhill,*  
*courtesy of Helen Laird*

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DAY OF THE FIESTA, ORAIBI.  
oil on board  
13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
Eugene B. Adkins Collection





## Acknowledgments

**C**arl Oscar Borg: *A Niche in Time* has brought together sixty-five works of art from thirty collections throughout the United States, for exhibition at five institutions over a period of one year. I thank the directors of those museums for sharing my enthusiasm for Carl Oscar Borg's work and for hosting this exhibition in their cities: James K. Ballinger, Phoenix Art Museum; Richard R. Esparza, Santa Barbara Historical Museum; Fred Myers, Gilcrease Museum; and D. Ryan Smith, Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.

An exhibition of this nature requires the participation of many individuals. My deepest appreciation is extended to the lenders listed on a following page, who have entrusted their precious works of art to our care for the duration of the tour.

Of the directors, curators and registrars who have facilitated loans, I am particularly thankful to Judy Sourakli, Curator of Collections, Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington; Charles Desmarais, Director, and Bolton Colburn, Curator of Collections, Laguna Art Museum; James J. Dectz, Director, Frank Norick, Assistant Director, and Jeannine M. Talkovic, Registrar's Assistant, Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley; Gary Edson, Director, Robert B. Tucker, Jr., Collections Manager, and Rose Montgomery, Registrar, Museum of Texas Tech University; William Foxley, Director, and Jennifer Olson, Assistant Director, Museum of Western Art; Ed Muno, Curator of Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame; Elizabeth Broun, Acting Director, and Melissa Kroning, Associate Registrar, National Museum of American Art; Michael R. Grauer, Curator of Art, Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum; Ray W. Steele, Director, and Jan Postler, Registrar, C. M. Russell Museum; Karen L. Schultz, Curator of Collections, Santa Barbara Historical Museum; and Richard West, Director, and Barry Heisler, Curator of Collections, Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

I am especially grateful to the corporate and private collectors. A note of sincere appreciation goes to Elizabeth Cunningham, Director/Curator, and Lisa Patricia Ballinger, Curatorial Assistant, The Anschutz Collection; Phila McDaniel, Curator, Gardena High School; Patricia Trenton, Curator, The Los Angeles Athletic

Club; James D. Jackson, Curator, Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art; and Judy Hudson, Curator, Valley National Bank.

Of the many individuals who provided inspiration, enthusiasm and valuable information, I extend my foremost appreciation to Helen Laird. Without her encouragement and willingness to share resources, the scope of *Carl Oscar Borg: A Niche in Time* would be severely limited. Beyond her generosity in helping locate important works of art, she authored a biographical essay and chronology especially for this publication. Her diligent research and precise knowledge of Carl Oscar Borg rewards the readers with a thorough understanding and appreciation of his art and life. I also thank Michael R. Grauer for contributing an insightful art historical essay for this catalog. His observations of Borg's approach to art provide us with an even more interesting viewpoint. Chief among other individuals who assisted in the location of specific works are A. P. Hays, Nan and Roy Farrington Jones and Marlene Schulz.

I thank the Palm Springs Desert Museum staff who were involved with the organization of this traveling exhibition and accompanying publication. While assisting with the catalog production, Museum Registrar Kathleen Clewell performed the enormous responsibility of arranging loan agreements, insurance, photography, crating and shipping of the exhibition as it traveled to the five venues. Art Preparators William McCracken and Gary Singer used their specific talents to carefully handle and install the works in our galleries. Assistant Curator of Art Michael Zakian and Art Research Associate Iona M. Chelette efficiently assisted with the numerous facets of organizing the exhibition and catalog. Research materials were collected by Librarian Mary Fahr; Museum Intern Wendy DeForest aided in the organization of photographic material; a portion of the catalog manuscript was typed by Secretary Suzanne Bond, who also prepared the extensive correspondence; and Director of Education and Acting Co-Director Janice Lyle planned a stimulating program of educational activities to enhance the project.

I relied heavily on the full dedication of Graphic Designer Lilli Cristin, who designed and supervised production of this exhibition catalog. Her creative tal-



GRAND CANYON OF ARIZONA. 1917  
oil on canvas  
42 x 32 inches  
Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art



ents are evident in this expertly produced publication. Editor Barbara McAlpine efficiently scrutinized and evaluated my manuscript.

Foremost among the supporters of *Carl Oscar Borg: A Niche in Time* is the Wells Fargo Bank which provided funding for the exhibition, publication and educational programs. Their support of western American art is fully recognized and appreciated. A contribution by 3-Way Corporation assisted with the funding of transportation as the exhibition circulated to the other museums participating.

I offer my thanks to Palm Springs Desert Museum's Western Art Council: Chairman H. Earl Hoover II, the Board of Directors and the many members who, through their interest of western American art have provided funds in support of this project. Collectors James L. Coran and Walter A. Nelson-Rees have also made a contribution toward this publication. Their generosity and interest are sincerely appreciated. My gratitude always is extended to Marshall M. Gelfand, President, Board of Trustees of the Palm Springs Desert Museum, for his whole-hearted support.

The professional commitment of everyone involved in this effort are apparent in this presentation of *Carl Oscar Borg: A Niche in Time*.

**Katherine Plake Hough**  
Curator of Art and Acting Co-Director  
Palm Springs Desert Museum



## Lenders

Eugene B. Adkins Collection  
The Anschutz Collection  
The Bischoff Collection  
The Buck Collection, Laguna Niguel, California  
Charles and Julie Coffman  
James L. Coran and Walter A. Nelson-Rees  
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Katherine H. Haley Collection  
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Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, California  
Helen and David Laird  
The Los Angeles Athletic Club Collection  
Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of  
California, Berkeley  
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Museum of Western Art, Denver  
National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City  
National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian  
Institution  
Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas  
C. M. Russell Museum, Great Falls, Montana  
Santa Barbara Historical Society, California  
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California  
Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art  
Marlene and Werner Schulz  
Valley National Bank, Phoenix  
Elisabeth Waldo-Dentzel Collection



HERMIT CAMP, GRAND CANYON. 1917  
*oil on canvas*  
40 x 30 inches  
*Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art*





## Carl Oscar Borg: A Niche in Time

**C**arl Oscar Borg: *A Niche in Time* reintroduces the artist's paintings, etchings and woodcuts (executed between 1916 and 1935) of the American Southwest landscape and its Navajo and Hopi inhabitants. Although Borg was highly regarded in his lifetime and was the recipient of numerous awards and medals, his artwork has seldom been featured in one-person exhibitions since his etchings were displayed at the Smithsonian Institution in 1934. His paintings have been held by private, museum and university collections throughout the United States and Europe, but they have rarely been shown publicly. *Carl Oscar Borg: A Niche in Time* will provide public access to paintings that up to now have been available only in private collections or museum vaults. It will reevaluate the artist's depiction of life in the Southwest and the importance of southwest realism in the history of American art.

The artistic achievements of the southwestern American painters of the early 1900s are just now being given more scholarly attention. Overlooked since World War II, because of the emphasis on mainstream modern art, painters working in the Southwest had been considered a breed apart from artists of major art centers. Their work was seen as provincial and regional. *Carl Oscar Borg: A Niche in Time* joins the growing list of museum exhibitions aimed at reappraising the art and life of an artist who played a major role in the cultural heritage of the West.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century, many artists from Europe and the eastern United States traveled to the southwestern United States seeking new vistas and new experiences to inspire their work. Swedish-born Carl Oscar Borg was among those fascinated by the ethnic and cultural environment. He used paint, brushes and canvas to broadcast the unique qualities he found in California, Arizona and New Mexico.

The distinctive character of the Southwest's vast emptiness, massive mountains, deep canyons, vari-colored arroyos, rugged mesas and desert flats captured the artist-visitor's eye. The special quality of light in this part of the country provided artists with a fresh challenge in the handling of light and form. The grandeur of this unusual scenery was emphasized by atmosphere,



PUEBLOS. 1916  
oil on canvas  
16 x 20 inches  
National Cowboy Hall of Fame  
Collection, Oklahoma City

light, sky, color, clarity and expansiveness, the combination of which possessed a mystique attractive to painters. Such environmental phenomena as brilliantly colored skies, mountains bleached by intense sunlight, and swiftly traveling thunderhead clouds casting sharp shadows across mesas were impressive to behold. Horizontal spaces, extreme coloration and dramatic geological features demanded that artists find new formal solutions and varied approaches to painting the desert landscape.

Equally intriguing to visiting artists was the distinctive architecture found in this seemingly limitless expanse of land. Multi-storied stone structures in the Arizona Hopi villages became a focus for many of Borg's paintings. He was inspired to use simple architectural elements in his art work. Ladders, chimneys and protruding beams in his paintings transcended functional



HOPI ANGA KACHINA DANCER,  
MOENCOPÍ, SUMMER VILLAGE OF  
ORAIBÍ, ARIZONA. 1917  
*watercolor on paper*  
19 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches  
Collection of Lowie Museum of An-  
thropology, University of California,  
Berkeley

use. Thoughtful placement of these elements created dramatic shadows that slanted across backdrops of adobe structures.

Native Americans also were a rich and exotic source of subject matter; Indians in the colorful regalia of their religious rituals and sacred dances provided a unique and picturesque sight to capture on canvas. Borg's interest in Indian life resulted in canvases that evoke the sense of mystery their lifeways had upon him. He portrayed the Native Americans as premier living examples of the country's ancient, unspoiled heritage.

As many western artists moved toward a stylistic unity, their paintings evolved into distinctive expressions of the Indian's sense of order and harmony. On canvas Borg sought to embrace the spirit of man and nature living in harmony, a focus he found nonexistent in the works of earlier American artists. Although committed to realism, he employed nineteenth-century academic concepts of romantic idealism in his work. He developed his style, formal as well as spiritual, by creating strong geometric patterns and colors that responded to the intense light, form and color of the Southwest. The orderly arrangement of design in the colorful blankets, pottery and baskets made by Native Americans also had a prevailing effect. Inspired by local inhabitants and narrative compositions, and revealing a maturity of artistic vision, Borg was able to capture his subjects' exuberance for life.

Borg's importance to the Southwest transcends the picturesque. He played a seminal role in documenting the lives of the Native Americans. His patron, Phoebe Apperson Hearst, arranged a commission by the University of California, Berkeley, and the United States Bureau of Ethnology to paint and photograph daily activities of the Navajo and Hopi. Other painters in this period rarely documented scenes such as the Hopi Snake Dance, witnessed by Borg in 1917.

Although he made California his home, the artist returned to New Mexico and Arizona almost every spring for fifteen years, from 1916 until 1932, establishing warm, lasting friendships with several tribal members. Borg lived among the Hopi and Navajo, producing paintings that celebrated their spirit and captured important details of everyday lives. "He rendered in gouache, watercolor, oil, woodblock and dry point the 'real' American, his spirit and his land, as they were witnessed and understood by an artist who was also a historian, a mystic, and a poet walking the edge of a time. The Indians called him Hasten-na-va-ha-sa, he who comes in the spring."<sup>1</sup> Reflecting back on these subjects, Borg stated: "The Indians, of course, interested me because to my mind they are the 'only Americans,' a fast disappearing race, and I wanted to try and preserve some of their customs and religions in a permanent form."<sup>2</sup>

The Hopi admitted Borg into their *kiva* and initiated him into the Snake Clan at Shipaluvai, providing an intimacy that allowed observation of sacred ceremonies and rituals. He succeeded in preserving America's cultural heritage by documenting the customs and religious ceremonies that had been shared with him, and his paintings carry a strong spiritual message of the bond that existed between the Indian and his land.

Borg varied his stylistic treatment of a painting for a desired effect, drawing upon extensive experience and awareness of art movements. Typically, his style was loose, confident, unlabored and had an immediacy associated with *plein air* painting. Borg was at his best in the casual landscape scenes that combine portraiture and genre painting. Despite the expansive, open feeling of many of the outdoor canvases, Borg was adept at integrating the small figure into the landscape to convey a sense of intimacy between the subject and nature.



HOPÍ ANGA KACHINA DANCERS,  
MOENCOPI, SUMMER VILLAGE OF  
ORAIBI, ARIZONA. 1917  
watercolor on paper  
13½ x 19½ inches  
Collection of Lowie Museum of An-  
thropology, University of California,  
Berkeley



Borg's exposure to painting styles in Paris in 1912 must have readied him, at least subconsciously, for the subsequent impact that French Impressionism would have on American art and on his own technique. Formal concerns he addressed included a study of the intense desert light and atmospheric conditions as they envelop and define figures in the landscape, and an emphasis on forms and their placement within the overall context of the design. Borg's interpretation of an impressionistic style varies considerably, ranging from the colorful, light-filled paintings produced with quick, rhythmic brush strokes and figures blended into the landscape, to the more tightly painted works with broad, flat areas of color. The flat, smooth brush-strokes and the handling of light, which is never allowed to dissolve form, demonstrate the persistence of his technical discipline. The paintings depict the quality of light, color and spontaneity occasioned by the scene without disturbing the importance of the subjects.

Artists came to the West with a compulsion to paint native culture and landscape as unique images representing a specific traditional character. A renewed sense of

national purpose developed among the southwest artists in their quest to define an American art. By presenting Borg's varied approaches to the desert landscape and to the people, this exhibition will illuminate his stylistic contributions to the development of southwestern realism. *Carl Oscar Borg: A Niche in Time* contributes to an ongoing realization of the significance of American art in art history. It is our goal that this exhibition and its accompanying publication will establish the work of Carl Oscar Borg firmly within the historical breadth of American art.

**Katherine Plake Hough**

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Helen Laird, *Carl Oscar Borg and the Magic Region* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs N. Smith, Inc., 1986), p. 75.
- <sup>2</sup> Jessie A. Selkinghaus, "The Art of Carl Oscar Borg," *The American Magazine of Art* 18 (March 1927): 147.

THE GLORY OF THE GORGE.

*gouache*

19 x 13 1/4 inches

Katherine H. Haley Collection





## Carl Oscar Borg's Niche in American Art

*Reveal the spirit you have about the thing, not the materials you are going to paint. Reality does not exist in material things. Rather paint the flying spirit of the bird than its feathers.<sup>1</sup>*

Often, in the quest to reduce the obscurity of many artists who chose to work west of the Mississippi, examinations of their relationships to the whole of American art are sometimes skewed. A comprehensive vision of American art, and most importantly contemporaneous activities in American art, is imperative to discovering the niche of an artist.

When Carl Oscar Borg arrived in the United States in 1901, American art was in a state of flux. On one hand, a rejection of European influences was being discussed in certain circles in the East, and on the other, European modernism was viewed as the only possible solution to the relatively stagnant—in some eyes—state of American art. Robert Henri and his circle of artist-followers were insisting on an introspective look at urban themes as valid subjects for artistic expression, while the newly arrived Alfred Stieglitz began to promote European modernism and its subsequent effects on American artists in his various New York galleries. Carl Oscar Borg's career, especially the period covered in the present exhibition (1916–1935), saw the furor created by both the exhibition of “The Eight” (1908) and, later, the Armory Show (1913), as well as the decline of American modernism's first forays after World War I, and its slow recovery in the 1920s and 1930s.

Additionally, Borg's career witnessed the birth of American scene painting or Regionalism, a response to a search for particularly American themes, best exemplified by the rural scenes of the Midwest by Thomas Hart Benton, John Steuart Curry, and Grant Wood. Regional schools flourished in areas besides the Midwest. Artists also flocked to the West, questing for new themes for their canvases and stones, some casting about for what they considered the only truly American subjects left in the country. Perhaps the most familiar of the areas to which artists migrated are those in New Mexico and California.

Carl Oscar Borg, while relatively isolated from most of the avant-garde movements in American art in the first third of this century, displays remarkable similarities in his work to many of these same traditions. Obviously his most kindred spirits were in the West,

but he shared philosophies with several of the New York moderns, although certainly their pictorial realizations are radically different.

Whereas the present exhibition concentrates almost entirely on Borg's paintings of New Mexico and Arizona, it is important to recall his early experiences in California and the subsequent visual repertoire he gleaned from his associations with its artists.

Southern California was fertile ground for artistic expression when Borg arrived there in 1903, although by no means was it a cultural backwater. As Ruth Westphal writes: “Between 1900 and 1924 the population of Los Angeles grew from 102,000 to 1,750,000. Growing businesses created a need for commercial artists; an affinity for architectural decoration demanded mural painters; scene painters and set designers were needed for the fast-growing motion picture business; and a newly formed leisure class began to consume the services of portraitists and easel painters.”<sup>2</sup> In 1888, the Ruskin Art Club had been founded in Los Angeles, followed two years later by the Los Angeles Art Club. Studios and galleries were available in the Blanchard Building by 1899, and later the Ruskin Art Club, the Blanchard Gallery, and the Art Students' League of Los Angeles were housed there. In 1906 the “first regular art column” appeared in *The Los Angeles Times*, written by Antony Anderson who befriended Borg and supported the artist in his column.

Among the artists with whom Borg associated, William Wendt (1865–1946) was probably the most influential in terms of Borg's art. Called the premier California impressionist prior to 1930 by Nancy Moure,<sup>3</sup> Wendt invited Borg on sketching trips along the Southern California coast as early as 1907. Although Borg paid homage to no master, he did acknowledge that it was Wendt who taught him “more about painting than anyone else.”<sup>4</sup>

Although considered an “impressionist,” Wendt's pictures of the California landscape are atypical of those produced with the true impressionist palette. However, he may have passed on to Borg the construction of forms through brushstrokes of complimentary colors—colors less intense than those of Monet, to be sure—laid side by side. Further, Borg may have learned to recognize the presence of color in shadow from Wendt, a characteristic of many of his paintings such as *EVENING GLOW*,

HOPI CITY IN PAINTED DESERT.  
ca. 1920  
oil on canvas  
20 x 16 inches  
Elisabeth Waldo-Dentzel Collection

EVENING GLOW, ARIZONA. ca. 1930  
oil on canvas  
25 x 30 inches  
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P.  
Healey

ARIZONA, c. 1930, with its intense red-browns in the cutbank of the river. Further, Borg certainly found confreres in other members of the "Eucalyptus School," such as Elmer Wachtel (1864–1929), Marian Kavanaugh Wachtel (1875–1954), and Benjamin Brown (1865–1942), whose work is described as attractive and acceptable with dominant pastel tones and loose brushwork.<sup>5</sup>

These artists, better dubbed California "Impressionists," were part of the "flowering" of the American form of impressionism in California between 1900 and 1915. In spite of the geographical distance from the East, where American Impressionism had its strongest foothold, these artists "did not sever commercial relations with the East but continued to participate in Eastern exhibits and competitions."<sup>6</sup> The pipeline of communication through exhibition information between the East and West coasts kept artists in California abreast of new developments. Borg exhibited with many of the artistic fraternities in Southern California, yet adopted very little of their formulas for his own works.

When Borg began his annual treks to Arizona and New Mexico to paint the Indians in 1916, he entered one of the most fertile arenas of American art in the first third of the twentieth century. As Helen Laird succinctly indicates, Borg continued to paint California landscapes after 1916, but it was the Indian and his land that held the focus for him for the rest of his career.<sup>7</sup>

Borg's work among the Hopi and Navajo and in the Southwest proper (New Mexico and Arizona) compares favorably to other artists working in relatively the same areas, especially the most well-known colonies at Taos and Santa Fe. Although cut from a cloth different from the generally academically-trained painters inhabiting these towns, his pictorial solutions to many of the same problems of these painters exhibit remarkable similarities to, and differences from, their solutions. Generally, the Taos and Santa Fe painters focused on three areas in their works: Hispanic culture, Indian culture, and the northern New Mexico landscape. Carl Oscar Borg sought the Indian and, usually, the Arizona landscape for his subjects, and his works provide interesting comparisons to those of the Taos and Santa Fe painters.

The Taos Society of Artists held its first official meeting in July 1915, including Oscar E. Berninghaus (1874–1952), Ernest Blumenschein (1874–1960), E. Irving Couse (1866–1936), W. Herbert Dunton (1878–1936),

Bert G. Phillips (1868–1956), and Joseph Henry Sharp (1859–1953) as its charter members. Two years later Victor Higgins (1884–1949) and Walter Ufer (1876–1936) were elected to the Society, followed by the election of Julius Rolshoven (1858–1930). In 1924, Catherine C. Critcher (1868–1964) and E. Martin Hennings (1886–1956) were elected to active membership, and in 1926 Kenneth M. Adams (1897–1981) was elected as the final active member before the Society was dissolved the following year.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of the Indian it must be remembered that the majority of Borg's Indian paintings are of either Hopis or Navajos, while those of the Taos painters tend to be of Rio Grande Valley Pueblo Indians (Taos, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Tesuque, and others). However, Borg and the Taos artists did paint at Acoma. The native peoples chosen as subjects are not the only differences between Borg's and the Taos painters' renditions.

Borg was originally hired by the Bureau of American Ethnology and the University of California, Berkeley to record, with canvas and camera, the Navajo and Hopi, hopefully before government attempts at acculturation, begun in 1887 with the Dawes Act, had obliterated all of their native customs and culture. He was sent to rescue these Native American groups from oblivion and establish their immortality, to a certain degree, in two dimensions. Essentially, the Taos painters, especially Couse and Phillips, saw the Pueblo Indians as subjects for art in a less altruistic light, in spite of their concern for the Indians themselves. Instead the Taos painters viewed the Indians as picturesque replacements for ". . . the hackneyed subject matter of thousands of painters; windmills in a Dutch landscape; Brittany peasants with sabots; French roads lined with Normandy poplars; lady in negligee reclining on a sumptuous divan; lady gazing in a mirror; lady powdering her nose; etc., etc.," of which they were "ennuied."<sup>9</sup>

Compared with the work of Couse, Phillips, or even Sharp, Borg's tableaux of Hopis or Navajos are matter-of-fact, candid renderings of the subjects themselves, with little or no artifice. For example, in his HOPI PORTER, NAMPEJO, 1920, Borg added no articles inauthentic to the Hopi to this unadorned scene of one of the masters of the ceramic craft at work. Here, there is no Taos Indian, clad in Northern Plains leggings, decorating an









HOPI POTTER, NAMPEJO. 1920  
*oil on canvas*  
15 x 18 inches  
Collection of Jess LaDow  
Photography by Ted Hill

INDIAN BATHER.  
*oil on canvas*  
16 x 20 inches  
Collection of C.M. Russell Museum,  
Great Falls, Montana

Acoma pot by firelight. Nampejo (Nampeyo) sits in the white-hot light of Arizona outside the entrance to her dwelling decorating another *chef d'oeuvre* in clay. Borg recognized the bond between the potter and the earth on which she sits, and the wall of the pueblo against which she is silhouetted, and saw no need to elaborate. Borg's paintings of this type have more in common with photographers in the Southwest such as Adam Clark Vroman (1856–1916), who documented Indians in New Mexico and Arizona between 1895 and 1904, and Edward S. Curtis (1868–1955), who also photographed Nampeyo at work in c. 1900, and with illustrators such as Willard L. Metcalf (1858–1925), sent to Zuni by *Harper's Monthly* in 1882.

Borg's works featuring Indians in landscapes are best compared with those of Walter Ufer or Victor Higgins. However, these two Taos artists tended to see the Indian in a landscape in formal, rather than pictorial, terms. Almost always in their pictures, the landscape acts as a backdrop although the relationship between Indian and earth is not in question. Borg emphasized this relationship, often making the Navajos seem to sprout from the earth itself as in *THE RAINMAKERS*, 1928. Further, in paintings of Indian daily life such as *INDIAN BATHER*, Borg's bather echoes the shape of the boulders in the curve of his back, and his coloration is indigenous to the rocks themselves; he is of the earth.

An intriguing painting, atypical of Borg's Southwestern works, is his *IN THE CATTLE COUNTRY (NAVAJO COUNTRY)*. Certainly more narrative than many of the other works in the present exhibition, this picture recalls many of W. Herbert Dunton's cowboy paintings, particularly his small works. Borg's slight stylization of sagebrush and the cowboy's ten-gallon, William S. Hart-style hat, are hallmarks of Dunton's nostalgic Western paintings. Perhaps Borg's associations with Hollywood found their way into this easel painting, going hand in hand with Dunton's views of the West.

In landscape, the Taos painters' works often pale in comparison with Borg's. As Charles Eldredge writes, the Taos painters' lack of interest in pure landscape stemmed from their view of it as "... largely a background for narrative compositions and figure studies."<sup>10</sup> Additionally, Borg's landscapes centered on the more sublime towering cliffs of Canyon de Chelly or the Grand Canyon, for example, while those of the Taos

painters focused on the more picturesque, rolling Sangre de Cristos, although the Rio Grande Gorge was within their grasp. Ernest Blumenschein's later work, often including scenes of the Gorge, reflects a reduction of boulders and cliffs to their often repetitive essential shapes, a rather modern approach also found in Borg's *THE GREAT RIVER, GRAND CANYON*, 1932. Borg also recognized the need to bond the Indian with the landscape, a method he used in *CANYON DE CHELLY* and in *EVENING IN CANYON DE CHELLY*, c. 1935, where the shape of the shepherd figure, dwarfed by the towering cliffs, is repeated in the cliffs themselves.

Borg fits less well into the cadre of artists composing the Santa Fe Art Colony, a group much more loosely organized than the Taos Society of Artists, to be sure. As they did in Taos, artists came and went in Santa Fe; nevertheless, there were roughly fifteen artists working in Santa Fe by 1921.<sup>11</sup> Certainly more progressive in many respects than their brethren to the north, the Santa Fe artists were attracted to northern New Mexico for the same reasons as the Taos artists, with the added incentive of free studio space in the Palace of the Governors beginning in 1917. Borg's work finds the most relevant comparisons to that of Santa Fe Art Colony members Gerald Cassidy (1879–1934), Robert Henri (1865–1929), and Warren E. Rollins (1861–1962).

Borg may have known of Cassidy's work through a mural Cassidy had done at the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915, at which Borg exhibited and won a silver medal. Both Borg and Cassidy favored images of mounted Indians juxtaposed against a desert landscape with a low horizon and predominant sky, a good example of which is Borg's *EVENING SONG (NAVAJO)*, c. 1932. Both artists also tended to use a rather painterly brush allowing the stroke in the paint to emphasize the illusion of movement in their canvases of this type.

In portrait heads, too, both Borg and Cassidy shared characteristics. In Borg's *NAVAJO MEDICINE MAN* the structure of the face is revealed through the careful construction of brushstrokes and light and dark values, while allowing the luminous color to add sparkle to the enigmatic portrait. The brushstrokes also feel their way around forms, creating the illusion of three dimensions in spite of the revelation of the medium. These same qualities are found in many Indian portraits painted by Cassidy, who moved to Santa Fe in 1912.

THE RAINMAKERS. 1928

*oil on canvas*

40 x 38 inches

*Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E.  
McKee, III*

IN THE CATTLE COUNTRY (NAVAJO  
COUNTRY).

*oil on canvas*

25 x 30 inches

*Collection of Santa Barbara Historical  
Society, California*

EVENING SONG (NAVAJO). ca. 1932

*oil on canvas board*

16 x 20 inches

*Collection of James L. Coran and  
Walter A. Nelson-Rees*







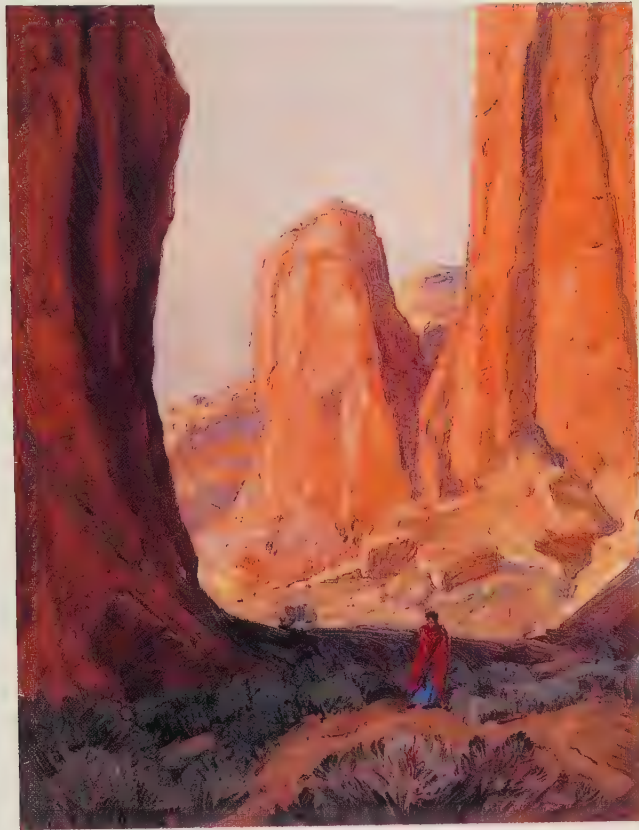
THE GREAT RIVER, GRAND CANYON.  
1932  
oil on canvas  
24½ x 20½ inches  
Collection of Laguna Art Museum,  
Laguna Beach, California, Gift of  
Lilly Borg Elmer

EVENING IN CANYON DE CHELLY.  
ca. 1935  
oil on canvas  
20 x 16 inches  
The Biscoff Collection  
Photography by Ted Hill

CANYON DE CHELLY  
gouache  
19½ x 23 inches  
Eugene B. Adkins Collection







NAVAJO MEDICINE MAN.  
*gouache*  
19½ x 15½ inches  
Eugene B. Adkins Collection

DANCE AT WALPI, ARIZONA 1918  
*oil on canvas*  
25 x 30 inches  
The Los Angeles Athletic Club  
Collection  
Photography by Lawrence Reynolds

Borg's Indian portraits are decidedly dissimilar to the well-known paintings of similar subjects by Henri, who spent time in Santa Fe in 1916, 1917, 1922, and 1925. Invariably, Henri treated his Native American subjects as exotics; in fact their Asian heritage seems to be enhanced in many of his portraits. Likewise, Henri approached his sitters as studio-arranged and lit formal problems, with value playing a significant role in each work. Contrarily, Borg's portraits lack the contrivance of the studio. His portraits of Hopis and Navajos appear to have been painted *en plein air* without attempting to disguise or reduce the saturating light of the Southwest, something to which Henri apparently had difficulty adjusting.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Borg's portrait subjects were not composed for the studio as the disheveled—to our eye—appearance of his NAVAJO MEDICINE MAN indicates.

Like Borg, Warren E. Rollins, who began painting in New Mexico in 1893, painted the pueblos themselves, often juxtaposing Indians at work or play against them. However, in Rollins's pictures, a certain amount of stylization of forms into flat, decorative shapes, especially those of figures, is often present. As with his more straightforward representations of Hopis or Navajos, Borg's paintings of life in and around the pueblo, such as DANCE AT WALPI, ARIZONA, 1918, are unidealized and unromanticized as the presence of the umbrella in DANCE AT WALPI reveals. Certainly Borg's distance from the scene in this painting resulted in rather cursorily rendered figures. Nevertheless, the figures are not separated from the pueblo itself.

Obviously, Carl Oscar Borg filled an important niche in the art world of California, New Mexico, and Arizona in the first third of the present century. His art is unmistakably of that period and of those areas. However, Borg's place in American art cannot be truly discerned without examining his relationship to the rest of the United States. Did art movements in other areas have any relevance to Borg's art?

In 1908, while Borg was enjoying a certain amount of success in California, Robert Henri and seven other artists (Arthur B. Davies (1862–1928), William Glackens (1870–1938), Ernest Lawson (1873–1939), George Luks (1867–1933), Maurice Prendergast (1859–1924), Everett Shinn (1876–1953), John Sloan (1871–1951)) exhibited at the Macbeth Galleries in New York, calling themselves

"The Eight." Insistence on an introspective look at urban America without embellishment or disguise was a basic tenet for Henri's circle. Their lack of attempts at glossing over the blights of urban life caused many critics to dub the group "The Apostles of Ugliness." Borg, too, may have been disturbed by their grey-brown palettes, had he known of their work. Yet, these painters also insisted on American themes, ugly or no, as valid subjects for art, and chose to ignore the more fashionable European scenes popular at the time. Surely Carl Oscar Borg's art is aligned with this philosophy, whether it was conscious or not.

This insistence on American themes pervades American scene painting of the 1920s and 1930s. Strangely, Borg's work often shows the same strains of melancholy prevalent in much of the work of Edward Hopper (1882–1967) and Charles Burchfield (1893–1967). The haunting quality of Borg's PUEBLOS, with its lack of human presence, emphasized by the empty ladders, its eye-like windows, and the elimination of superficial detail, recalls many of these abandoned house scenes of Burchfield, and the deserted street views of Hopper. Like the often pessimistic work of Burchfield and Hopper, this work by Borg seems to anticipate the abandonment of the pueblos by many Native Americans as they rejected more traditional values in favor of the more immediate—as many are convinced—gratification of the modern age. Again, though, Borg's work, like Hopper's and Burchfield's, focused on American themes in response to the search for a truly American art.

Finally, does Borg's work have anything to do with the modernism (European and American) promoted by Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946)? Hoping that by raising the level of sophistication in art by exhibiting progressive European movements, Stieglitz helped foster an American art that could hold its own with European art but was also distinctly American.

Borg's work has very little to do with that of most of the artists in Stieglitz's stable. However, his work does indeed have close ties, on both a philosophical and pictorial level, to an artist introduced by Stieglitz, Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986). O'Keeffe's spiritual communion with nature in the Southwest is well documented and reveals itself in her paintings. As Sharyn Udahl writes: "With a singularity and strength nearly unique to this





SUNSET CANYON DE CHELLY. 1916  
oil on canvas  
40 x 30 inches  
Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art

artist, her paintings describe their maker as an unflinching observer who grasped the sometimes subtle, sometimes startling formal relationships she found in the Southwest and presented them in a variety of ways . . .<sup>13</sup> These words could have been written just as easily about Carl Oscar Borg. Borg, too, was aware of the “spirit of place” in the Southwest, and, looking beyond the conservative—as some would have it—bent of his art, that unique flavor is revealed in his work. For example, with O’Keeffe, Borg shared the vision of the indigenous pueblo architecture as an organic part of the earth itself. Disregarding their symbolic associations, O’Keeffe’s well known paintings of Ranchos de Taos Church, display an attention to planar orientation that is also present in Borg’s work such as his *DANCE AT WALPI*. Additionally, the dwellings in Borg’s painting are a part of the mesa at Walpi just as the Ranchos de Taos Church grows out of the ground in O’Keeffe’s many versions of the subject.

Both Borg’s and O’Keeffe’s vision of the Southwestern landscape shows striking similarities. O’Keeffe’s elimination of the superficial while still maintaining the integrity of the subject results in some of the greatest achievements in American painting. Many of her paintings of single hills or cliffs have assumed iconic proportions. Carl Oscar Borg’s *SUNSET CANYON DE CHELLY*, 1916, achieves this same emblematic appeal. Save the Indian figures at the base of the cliff for scale (one wonders if Borg ever felt comfortable with pure landscape), this painting is a celebration of the color, light, and form unique to the landscape of the American Southwest. And its engaging similarity to several of O’Keeffe’s cliff paintings is striking. It may be Borg’s masterpiece.

Often, contextual studies of American art tend to pigeonhole certain artists, resulting in a skewed view of their art in terms of the rest of the nation. In this essay, an attempt was made to place Borg’s art in a more comprehensive picture. Obviously many movements and artists were excluded in this brief overview. Hopefully, however, those included and discussed will aid in understanding his art better in terms of his fellow artists, and in determining Carl Oscar Borg’s proper niche in American art.

Michael R. Grauer, Curator of Art  
Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Robert Henri as quoted in Barbara Rose, ed., *Readings in American Art, 1900–1975* (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1975), p. 40.
- <sup>2</sup> Ruth Westphal, “The Development of an Art Community in the Los Angeles Area,” *Plein Air Painters of California: The Southland* (Irvine: Westphal Publishing, 1982), p. 28.
- <sup>3</sup> Nancy Dustin Wall Moure, “Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and the Eucalyptus School in Southern California,” *Plein Air Painters of California*, pp. 6–7.
- <sup>4</sup> Helen Laird. *Carl Oscar Borg and the Magic Region* (Layton: Gibbs N. Smith, Inc., 1986), p. 29.
- <sup>5</sup> Moure, “Impressionism,” pp. 12–13.
- <sup>6</sup> Jean Stern, “The Development of California Impressionism,” *Plein Air Painters of California*, p. 16.
- <sup>7</sup> See Helen Laird’s biographical essay in this catalogue.
- <sup>8</sup> Julie Schimmel, “Chronology,” *Art in New Mexico, 1900–1945: Paths to Taos and Santa Fe* (New York: Abbeville Press, for the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1986), pp. 181–188.
- <sup>9</sup> Ernest L. Blumenschein, “Origin of the Taos Art Colony,” *El Palacio* 20 (15 May 1926): 190–192, as cited in Julie Schimmel, “From Salon to Pueblo,” *Art in New Mexico*, p. 51.
- <sup>10</sup> Charles C. Eldredge, “The Faraway Nearby,” *Art in New Mexico*, p. 150.
- <sup>11</sup> Sharyn Rohlfen Udahl, “Let the Years Worry: Art Life in Santa Fe 1900–1942,” *Santa Fe Art Colony* (Santa Fe: The Peters Corporation, 1987), p. 12.
- <sup>12</sup> Van Deren Coke, *Taos and Santa Fe: The Artist’s Environment, 1882–1942* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1963), p. 39.
- <sup>13</sup> Sharyn Rohlfen Udahl, *Modernist Painting in New Mexico 1913–1935* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1984), p. 137.





CANYON DE CHELLY, 1929  
watercolor  
18 x 12 inches  
Collection of  
Mr. and Mrs. W.R. Hilligoss  
Photography by Janice Felgar





DESERT STORM, ARIZONA.

*oil on canvas*

*36 x 40 inches*

*Collection of Museum of Western Art,  
Denver*



THE LONE RIDER. 1919

*oil on canvas*

18 x 24 inches

*Collection of Helen and David Laird*





Shortly before his death in 1947, while living in Santa Barbara, California, Carl Oscar Borg began to write his autobiography. He wrote in Swedish, his native language. Employing an old Swedish saying as prologue: “‘I want to be what I am’ the porcupine said when the troll wanted to change him into a grasshopper,” he began: “Everything has been struggle and work.”

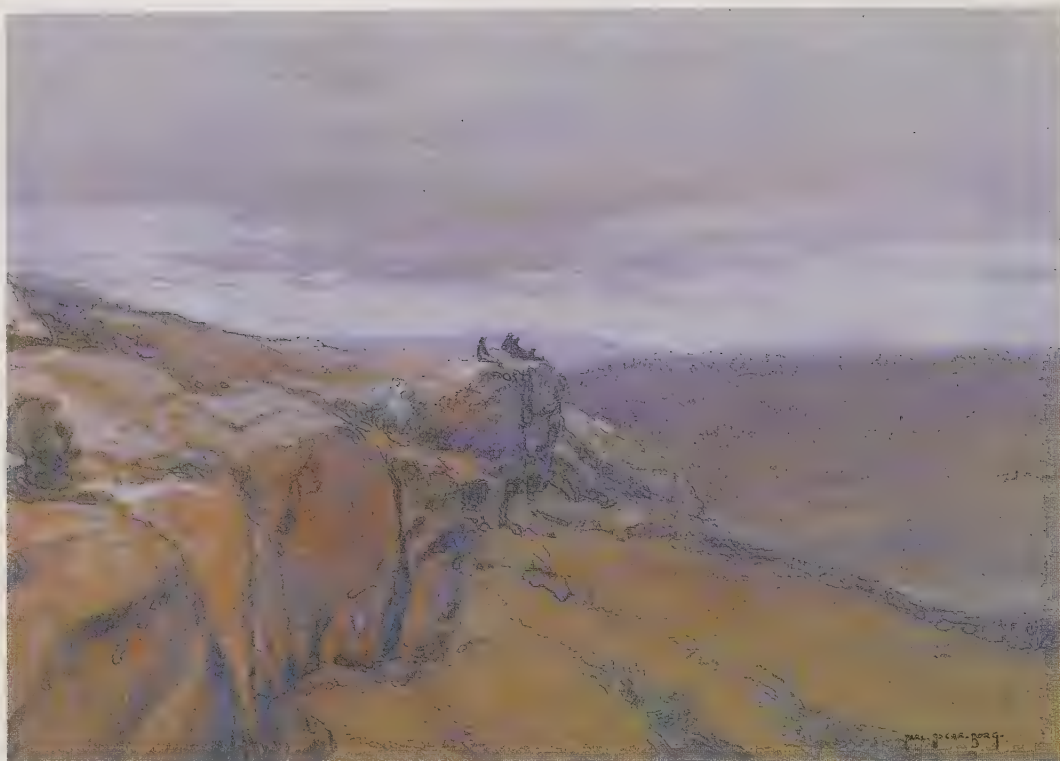
In the course of a life which contemporaries thought read like a fairy tale, the self-taught artist moved from impoverished beginnings in a one room wood cabin in a tiny farming community in Dals-Grinstad, Sweden, to the vast, unfenced American West. He lived on streets, in shacks, in great houses, on the open desert. He called himself a wanderer, a man at home everywhere and nowhere, one who had to learn to understand others who could not understand him. Impelled by poverty and his talent, the acutely sensitive, highly intelligent, personable, over-reacher wandered over Europe, North Africa, Canada and the United States. Taking upon himself every challenge of his field, he mastered watercolor, gouache, oil, etching, dry point, woodblock, colored monotype. Mystical in his sense of the wonder and oneness of the universe, deeply philosophical, widely read, he found his thoughts expressed in Empedocles and Goethe. He regarded his extraordinary talent as both gift and obligation. Art for him was a matter of keeping the record, “a kind of religion, the worship of the beauty in nature.”

Born on March 3, 1879, Carl Oscar Borg was the eldest child of Gustaf Borg, a gruff, heavy drinking career soldier who was often away from home, and Kristina Olsdatter Borg, a gentle long-suffering woman who had children one after another, endured hunger and poverty uncomplainingly, was terrified of storms, and loved to read sad stories. Borg claimed that his childhood, in which he experienced hunger and cold, was, nonetheless, like all childhoods, a magical time when by force of imagination a harsh world was transformed to a heroic, wonderful one. He went to school in winter until he was fourteen and showed himself a gifted student in history and language, but not in arithmetic. Later, in his art, he became an intuitive geometrician, visually mastering line and space and relationship, but ordinary calculations defeated him and he was a poor businessman.

In the spring and summers, Borg's family sent him out to work as a herd boy for wealthier farmers as soon as he was old enough to earn a little money. The loneliness of those days and the feel of the still frozen fields on his bare feet remained impressed on his memory. His mind was full of stories too, sagas and Andersen's fairy tales. Troll power was recognized in the pre-industrial world of his childhood. The elders attributed a vision Borg had on a Christmas Eve when he was three years old to troll power. A tiny white horse pulled a carriage across the floor in front of him and to his bitter sorrow vanished. Other incidents indicated a realm beyond the ordinary. A simpleton in the village saw a funeral cortege and announced its approach to Borg days before the actual cortege came down the road.

From his earliest childhood, Borg showed marked artistic ability, endlessly sketching the reproduction of King Gustavus Adolphus, the only picture that hung on the wall of the family cottage, and studying the yellowing etchings in an old family Bible. His interest in art was mocked by his father who declared he would never amount to anything, and praised by his teacher, Lars Nören, who said his drawings were good. The Lutheran minister, A. Magnus Nilman also admired the boy's gift and intelligence. When Borg was fourteen, he asked Pastor and Mrs. Nilman if he might work for them. In exchange for grooming their horses and doing other odd jobs, Borg received his room and board and was welcomed in their home as a child of their own. He credited the learned and compassionate minister and his wife, as being a decisive influence in his life. The Nilmans gave Borg his first set of paints and free access to their extensive library. For the first time, with work that was not too hard, with the leisure to read and to paint, and encouragement from individuals not brutalized by drink and overwork, new life possibilities opened for Borg.

Recognizing Borg's need for a means of earning a livelihood, Pastor Nilman arranged for his apprenticeship to a master house painter-decorator in the neighboring town of Vänersborg. Borg survived a fall from a scaffold when he nearly bit off his tongue and was roundly scolded for losing the paint, and soon became one of the most capable painters in town. His apprenticeship completed, he set off for Stockholm, confident of making a living and hoping to become an artist. He described his





NAVAJOS AT RIO GRANDE, 1931  
*gouache*  
14 x 19½ inches  
Collection of Helen and David Laird

NAVAJO HERDING WILD HORSES,  
*gouache*  
15½ x 19⅞ inches  
Katherine H. Haley Collection

LAND OF THE NAVAJOS,  
*oil on canvas*  
27½ x 39½ inches  
Katherine H. Haley Collection



farewell to his mother the frosty morning in April 1899 when he was twenty and she walked down the road with him. The morning was raw, the sky a heavy blue-grey with only a stripe of lighter grey near the horizon. It blew cold over the monotonous field. When his mother had to go, they shook hands, not speaking their feelings. Borg watched her retreat, saw her thin clothes blow about her and her shawl fly out like large black wings. Borg's understanding of and sympathy with the Hopi and Navajo silence and stoicism, his appreciation for the deep feelings and communication that exist behind wordlessness comes from his early personal experience.

Naive, but secure in the possession of his talent, Borg stood with sketches under his arm on the steps of the Royal Theater, Stockholm, hoping to attract interest, but no one paused to look at his pictures. He found work with a ship painting firm and, when the ice broke in the spring of 1900, was asked to sail to France to finish a job at sea. Ordinarily restrained and accustomed to abuse by employers, an unjust reprimand from the captain when the job was completed, and the ship docked at Dunkirk, provoked a flash of temper. Borg demanded his money and left the ship. He did not speak French; he had no friends, and could not find work. Advised by a seaman's minister to sail for England where he could get passage either to Sweden or to America, he booked passage on a ship leaving Calais for Dover.

For a time, fate seemed to turn against him. A Frenchman, pretending to be a porter, gave Borg a trolley ticket as receipt and walked off with Borg's trunk containing his few possessions and his papers. Arriving in London, he was almost immediately set upon by thugs, beaten, robbed of his money, his watch, overcoat and hat (a bum's tattered coat and cap were left in exchange). Speaking no English, not knowing where to apply for help, for months Borg lived on the streets, a comrade to the world's abandoned poor. He slept on park benches or door stoops, searched garbage cans for something to eat, lingered in front of pubs in spite of his terror at the noise and the fighting that broke out, hoping for the offer of a beer from a stranger.

The spell of bad luck finally broke. His habit of visiting the docks and sketching sailors and ships on brown paper bags, or any scrap of paper he could find, led to the offer of a job from George Johansen, owner of a firm

specializing in portrait and marine paintings. He began to learn English, teaching himself to read by slowly working his way through Ainsworth's *The Tower of London*. He painted sets at the Drury Lane Theater where Henry Irving and Ellen Terry were starring. His star had begun to rise in England, but although successful and comparatively well off, it wasn't the life he had dreamt for himself.

"The unreachable . . . has been waving at me from over the peak of every mountain, waving with its bewitching smile, exhorting to new efforts," an exhausted Borg wrote near the end of his life when he viewed his ambition as "merely" ego. In 1901, however, life was an adventure to the young man and when a Norwegian sea captain offered to take him to America in exchange for painting pictures on his cabin walls, he accepted.

Borg entered the country illegally, hidden in the ship's propeller shaft, in Norfolk, Virginia. For two years he wandered about the East. He earned money decorating houses until he was black-balled by the union for working too quickly. He sketched pictures of plantations in the South, and painted portraits in Toronto, Canada, and in New York. In Philadelphia, he took a job carving "antique" furniture and became expert in the handling of wood cutting tools. As a boy, he had heard California spoken of as a place of refuge and good fortune. When an opportunity came to sign on the *S.S. Arizonan*, due to sail for California with steel rails for Collis P. Huntington and general merchandise and whiskey for Claus Spreckles, Borg signed on as an able bodied sailor.

On September 29, 1903, the *S.S. Arizonan* docked at the long wooden pier in Santa Monica. The dazzling luminosity of the air, the beauty of the distant purple-blue mountains, the ranchero riding over the Santa Monica hills who looked to Borg like a knight out of ages past, the friendly people who came out to greet the ship and extoll the city they called La Reina de los Angeles, and the subtle sense of romance, faith and spiritual vision that pervaded the atmosphere, convinced Borg that he should settle in Los Angeles. He jumped ship in San Francisco and walked the long way back following the Southern Pacific railroad tracks.

After a stint working at odd jobs, laying parquet floors, decorating buildings—a hotel in Pasadena and theater in Santa Monica—sleeping at the Salvation



Army headquarters, Borg began to develop a reputation as a reliable, hardworking, gifted newcomer in the budding town. A Danish photographer, Christian Pedersen, provided Borg his first real start in Los Angeles. Pedersen's son had automatically written a message saying a stranger would arrive to whom he should be good. When Borg wandered into his shop, Pedersen, having listened to his story, took him to be that stranger, and offered him a partnership in his modest studio in a small wooden building on Broadway, across the street from a gallery owned by William H. Cole. Borg took photographs, colored photographs, painted signs—including signs advertising the newly popular "Up-to-Date High Class Motion Picture Entertainment" at Thomas L. Tally's amusement arcade—and sets for the Casino Theater on Spring Street and the Unique Theater between Sixth and Seventh Streets. He introduced himself to Cole who introduced him to Antony Anderson, the *Los Angeles Times*' first art critic who became his close, lifelong friend.

Los Angeles had no art museum then, but artists had arrived drawn by the same qualities that attracted Borg. Their pictures were exhibited at Cole's gallery, at Idah Mecham Strobbridge's Little Corner of Western Art, at the Ruskin Art Club and the Blanchard Gallery. In 1905, Borg submitted one of his pictures, a watercolor, to the Ruskin Art Club. Accepted by Everett C. Maxwell, who became a friend, and, in 1913, the first curator of art for the Los Angeles Museum, IN FOG marks Borg's entrance into the Los Angeles art world. His picture hung with those of established artists: Fernand Lungren and William Keith, and those, who, like himself, were at the beginning of their careers: Marian Kavanaugh, Hanson Puthuff, Elmer Wachtel, Granville Redmond, Norman St. Clair.

Borg's circle of friendship expanded in 1906 when Idah Meacham Strobbridge met Borg, admired his work, and introduced him to her influential neighbors in the Garvanza, Charles and Eva Lummis, the cultural leaders of the community. Through Charles Lummis, who was filled with enthusiasm for the West and for native American cultures, Borg learned about and first became interested in the Hopi and the Navajo. Through Eva Lummis whose Spanish class he joined, paying for

lessons with sketches, he met William Wendt, Mary Gibson and Phoebe Apperson Hearst. Wendt, an immigrant from northern Germany, who, both in background, and in his deep religiosity, was temperamentally akin to Borg, took the younger painter with him on extended painting trips along the California coast and in Simi Valley. Mary Gibson, civic leader and President of the Friday Morning Club, found buyers for Borg's pictures and gave him an opportunity to paint in Central America. In the fall of 1908, she asked him to accompany her on a visit to her son, Hugh, whom Theodore Roosevelt had appointed to the American delegation in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

When Borg returned to California nine months later, in the spring of 1909, he had already gained a solid reputation as an explorer-painter, book and artifact collector, scholar, pundit, poet. His words describing the situation in the Central American countries were quoted in newspapers and his pictures of the turbulent area won prizes.

His star continued to rise. On August 20, 1909, the wealthiest and most famous of all California's patrons of the arts, Phoebe Apperson Hearst, sent Borg a letter saying that Mrs. Lummis had spoken of him and shown her a charming sketch which gave her a desire to meet him and to see more of his work. She invited him to her home near Mount Shasta and her Hacienda near San Francisco and sent him the railroad fare to make the trip. During the weeks that Borg spent in her company in the summer and fall of 1909, Mrs. Hearst closely observed him. Finding him to be as gifted, personable and worthy as Eva Lummis indicated he was, she became his patroness, and until her death in 1919, his "little mother" in whose homes he was welcome whenever he could come and for however long he wished to stay.

In 1910, Mrs. Hearst sent Borg in the company of an erudite Swedish-American professor, Gustavus Eisen, to Europe and North Africa to learn by exposure to the old world and great masters, to discover new scenes for pictures, and to gain the required European reputation. For four years, at her expense, Borg studied the old masters, painted the landscapes and people that interested him in Spain, Tangiers, Egypt, Italy, France; he exhibited in Rome, Venice, St. Petersburg, Ghent, Bruges, Amsterdam, Versailles, Vichy, Paris and London. A widely

IN WALPI, ARIZONA (or GRAY DAY,  
WALPI, ARIZONA). ca. 1934  
oil on canvas  
26 x 30 inches  
The Buck Collection, Laguna Niguel,  
California





SACRED MEDICINE.

*oil on canvas*

*20 x 24 inches*

*Collection of the West Texas Museum  
Association, Museum of Texas Tech  
University, Lubbock, Gift of  
Mrs. H.S. Griffin*



RACING NAVAJOS. ca. 1920  
*oil on canvas*  
20 x 24 inches  
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P.  
Healey

SNAKE DANCERS AT ORAIBI.  
*oil on canvas*  
32 x 39 inches  
Collection of Valley National Bank,  
Phoenix

celebrated one man exhibition at the Jules Gautier Gallery in Paris in 1913 brought Borg rave reviews for his sincere, sensitive, subtle, intensely poetic and powerfully expressive pictures. Reference was made to his pantheistic imagination which "unites everything." While the moderns, whose work Borg saw and rejected in France, worked atomically to split traditional associations and shock bourgeois sensibility, Borg, who like his friends in California, was deeply interested in linking a new world to an older one, sought unity and continuity.

Borg's European sojourn was interrupted by war. After a brief stay in New York at the Salmagundi Club, he returned to San Francisco to be near his patroness. In 1916, Phoebe Hearst arranged for him, through the University of California, Berkeley, and the United States Bureau of Ethnology, to go into the Hopi and Navajo reservations to photograph and to paint the Indians "as they are. Your hand is strong enough to paint and your eyes clear enough to see these twilight gods. The West needs a painter who understands the Indian soul." Borg's technical mastery and his spiritual affinity with the Indians with whose pantheism and stoicism he closely identified, was recognized by Mrs. Hearst, and by the Hopi and Navajo who willingly posed for him, shared their dreams, hardships, and stories, gave him the Indian name, Hasten-na-va-ha-sa (he who comes in the spring), and initiated him into the Snake Clan. For fifteen years Borg returned to Arizona and New Mexico in the spring and summer and while continuing to paint California landscapes, and winning prizes for them, Indian motifs and the landscape of Arizona and New Mexico became his principal subjects.

A first, highly acclaimed exhibition of pictures with Indian motifs was held at the Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco, in 1917. Typically, these were small gouache sketches. As an artist, who was also very much a wandering historian-archeologist whose mission was to record the fragile, transitory human scene against the awesome beauty, majesty and far greater permanency of nature, Borg recorded his first impressions, not only in the Indian country, but wherever he went, on site, on paper which could be easily shipped or transported. Later, in his studio, he worked major canvases in oil,

or executed drypoint studies from his pencil, watercolor and gouache studies.

While pursuing his goal to be a great artist, Borg had made many friends among artists, scholars, book and antique dealers, mystics, older women, but the nights, he said, were long. In 1918, when he was almost forty, and his reputation established, he married Madeline Carriel, an art student twenty years his junior. They settled in Santa Barbara in a home Borg built on the Mesa modelled after an Old Spanish church at Zuni, New Mexico. From 1918 until 1925, Borg lived in Santa Barbara, painting, exhibiting widely in group and one man exhibitions, holding regular open houses in his studio, teaching the outdoor painting classes at the Santa Barbara School of Arts, enjoying close friendships with photographers Carolyn and W. Edwin Gledhill, antiquarians Albert Falvy, Margaret and Katie Burke, and other artists including the elderly Thomas Moran, and Ed Borein, both of whose portraits he painted. The Borgs had no children, and Madeline, feeling lonely and isolated in the then largely undeveloped town, pressed for a return to Los Angeles where her family lived.

In 1925, the Borgs bought a house on North Hobart Avenue, Hollywood, and Borg built a studio in the backyard. He gave outdoor painting classes to master students at the California Art Institute, accepted private students in his studio, and began working as an art director for Douglas Fairbanks designing America's highly acclaimed first full length film in color, *The Black Pirate*. From 1925 until 1930, while continuing to paint major landscapes and pictures of Indian life, executing new etchings and woodblocks, and making his customary visits to the Indian country, Borg worked long hours at the United Artists Studio and, in the case of *The Winning of Barbara Worth*, on location in Nevada, straining his eyes executing hundreds of meticulously detailed watercolors from which movie sets were constructed.

Borg's fortune turned as the twenties ended and the depression began. The country lurched into a new machine dominated, standardized era; thousands of job seekers crowded into Los Angeles changing the community into a metropolis; representational art went out of favor as a materialistic culture became dominant.





SUMMER STORM, ARIZONA, 1934  
*oil on canvas*  
36" x 40" inches  
Collection of Helen and David Laird





Change swept through Borg's personal life as well. Many of his old friends, including Idah Meacham Strobbridge and Charles Lummis, died; Madeline took up with a younger man, and Borg's seemingly boundless youthful energies and confidence gave way to a serious, prolonged depression. Life, he wrote, had robbed him, a child of saga and song, and taken his free spirit and warm soul.

By 1932, Borg could no longer look "with longing romantic eyes at the great American desert." He was, as a writer for the *South Coast News*, *Laguna Beach* wrote in that year, one of America's foremost artists who depicted in his paintings "scenes of the golden west when Indians roamed freely over vast expanses, and when life in this region was a great adventure for strong men and women." But that time had passed. Nonetheless, during the dark, tormented thirties, when he drank too much, and moved restlessly about staying in Palm Springs with his friends the Vaughans, renting his own house in Santa Barbara, wandering up and down the coast, travelling into Mexico and into Utah, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, and, for longer and longer periods of time, to New York, he remained astonishingly productive executing major canvases including *TRADING POST*, *GANADO*, and *SUMMER STORM, ARIZONA*, and perfecting the colored monotype technique. In a changing world, hostile to his values, he cleaved to old standards. His work reflects his loneliness, but never the chaos of despair. Art for Borg was order; by achieving harmony in his art, he found emotional equilibrium, but the effort seemed tremendous now, and friends, concerned to see him so unhappy, urged him to return to Sweden. Perhaps among his own people, who might not be so influenced by the modern, materialistic, machine age, he could be happy.

Borg made three trips to Sweden in the thirties, in 1934, '36, and '38, dividing his time when he returned to the United States between Southern California and New York. In 1936, having fallen in love with a Swedish woman, Lilly Lindstrand, he thought the winter of his life past, the trees green, and "the world filled with small flowers, delicate and lily white." He thought he could be happy in his native land with Lilly. His need was, he said, for someone to love him.

In 1938, his affairs in America settled, he returned to Sweden, married Lilly, bought a house in Gothenburg, joined the newly formed Dalsland group of artists, and tried to become Swedish again. He didn't succeed. War blocked him in Sweden, but in 1945, as soon as ships could sail again, he wanted to return to California, and Lilly agreed to the move to Santa Barbara. He gave a number of etchings and watercolors to the Gothenburg Ethnological Museum and his collection of Indian artifacts, pottery, jewelry, blankets, baskets, to the National Ethnological Museum in Stockholm. Shortly before his return to America, the Swedish Royal Academy of Science presented him with the prestigious Linné Silver Medal in honor of the major contributions he had made to the understanding of the Hopi and Navajo Indians.

Borg had not been able to become Swedish again; he was never really American either, but California was, in memory at least, "a state" from which he hoped never to awaken. Poet, dreamer, one for whom actuality had measured up to desire, and also failed to do so, Borg, in the last year of his life, when he began to write his autobiography, acknowledged the troll power which had steered his course, and the exhaustive labors which had fulfilled it.

He died on May 8, 1947, of a heart attack while dining alone in a restaurant in Santa Barbara.

**Helen Laird**

THE PAINTED DESERT.  
*oil on canvas*  
15 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 19 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches  
Katherine H. Haley Collection





STRONGHOLD OF THE HOPI.  
*watercolor on paper*  
 19<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 16 inches  
 Collection of Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas,  
 Gift of Mrs. H.S. Griffin



NAVAJO BLANKET WEAVER.  
*watercolor*  
 11<sup>6</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 8<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches  
 Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
 Horace C. Henry Collection,  
 University of Washington, Seattle



NAVAJO HORSEMEN IN CHIN-LEE  
VALLEY.  
*oil on canvas*  
35<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 51<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
Collection of Santa Barbara Historical  
Society, California





THE HUSH OF EVENING. ca. 1925

tempera

34 x 30 inches

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. A.P. Hays

Photography by Bill McLemore



THE GRAND CANYON. 1927  
*oil on canvas*  
30 x 34 inches  
Gardena High School Art Collection,  
California

GRAND CANYON.  
*oil on canvas*  
40 x 30 1/8 inches  
Collection of the National Museum of  
American Art, Smithsonian Institution,  
Gift of Mrs. Martin O. Elmborg

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK.  
1924  
*oil on canvas*  
33 x 45 inches  
Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art







HOPI SHRINE. 1916

watercolor

7<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches

Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
Horace C. Henry Collection,  
University of Washington, Seattle

HOTWILLA, ARIZONA. 1916

watercolor

6<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 9<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches

Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
Horace C. Henry Collection,  
University of Washington, Seattle

KEAM'S CANYON.

watercolor

9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches

Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
Horace C. Henry Collection,  
University of Washington, Seattle







*Carl Oscar Borg, 1907. Photography  
courtesy of Helen Laird.*





## Biographical Chronology

1879	Born March 3, Karl Oskar Borg, in Österbyn Östra, Grinstads parish, Sweden, to Gustaf Eriksson Borg and Kristina Olsdotter Borg, the first of ten children.	1904	Joins Christian Pedersen as partner in small photography studio on Broadway. Establishes reputation as photographer, decorator, sign painter. Paints signs advertising films at Tally's amusement arcade. Paints sets for the Unique Theater and Casino Theater.
1885	Begins formal education in the village school.		
1887	Begins working as herd boy during spring and summer school recesses. Talent for drawing and interest in art remarked by villagers. Praised by teacher, but scolded by father for wasting his time.	1905	Exhibits first picture in Los Angeles, watercolor, IN FOG, at 4th Annual exhibition of Ruskin Club. Meets curator Everett C. Maxwell, <i>Los Angeles Times</i> art critic Antony Anderson, collector, gallery owner William H. Cole. Beginning of life-long friendships.
1893	Formal education ends. Confirmed. Works for Lutheran minister who encourages his interest in art.		Becomes half owner of Casino Theater. Exhausted, is hospitalized with typhus. William H. Cole takes him to Lake Arrowhead to recuperate. Decides to devote himself full time to his art.
1894	Begins apprenticeship as housepainter-decorator in Vänersborg.		December, exhibits monotypes and watercolor sketches at Cole Gallery, Los Angeles.
1899	Completes apprenticeship. Moves to Stockholm. Finds job in ship painting firm.		Meets Idah Meacham Strobridge, owner of gallery, Little Corner of Local Art, in Garvanza, who introduces him to Charles and Eva Lummis. Charles Lummis interests him in the Indians. Attends Eva Lummis' Spanish classes at El Alisal along with William and Julia Bracken Wendt and Mary and Hugh Gibson. Close friendships develop.
1900	Sails aboard <i>The Ornen</i> to complete a painting job at sea. Argues with captain. Leaves ship in Dunkirk. Unable to find work in France, sails for England. Robbed and beaten in London. Lives as bum for several months. Goes to docks, sketches ships and sailors. Is offered job in George Johansen's "Portrait and Marine Painter" firm. Paints portraits and marines for Johansen and sets at Drury Lane Theater.	1906	Becomes a founding member of Painters Club along with friends Antony Anderson, William H. Cole, Hansen Puthuff. Rents studio at 221 West 5th Street, Los Angeles.
1901	Paints pictures in captain's quarters in exchange for free trip to America aboard Norwegian ship. Enters country illegally in Norfolk, Virginia. Hired as house painter-decorator, but fired for working too quickly. Goes to Toronto, Canada. Hired by Dominion Portrait Company. Paints portraits.		April 18, in San Francisco during earthquake. Misses opening of his first one man exhibition of thirty pictures, landscapes and marines, at the Steckel Gallery, 336 1-2 Broadway, April 10-30. Sells several paintings.
1902	Goes to New York, then Philadelphia looking for work. Takes job carving "antique" furniture. Becomes skilled woodcarver.		May 14-June 16, exhibits monotypes, EVENING and BEHIND THE SCENES, group
1903	Hires on the S.S. <i>Arizonan</i> as "able bodied seaman." Sails for California. Arrives Santa Monica, September 29. Decides to settle in Los Angeles. Jumps ship in San Francisco and walks back to Los Angeles. Takes odd jobs.		



*Carl Oscar Borg. 1909. Photography by W. Edwin Gledhill, courtesy of Helen Laird.*

exhibition of local artists and sculptors, Blanchard Art Gallery, 233 South Broadway.

November 19–December 2, exhibits oils and watercolors, landscapes and marines, at the Little Corner of Local Art, East Avenue 41.

December 10–30, one man exhibition of forty monotypes which “sold rapidly,” at the Little Corner of Local Art.

1907 Paints out of doors along the Southern California coast with William Wendt.

1908 January, one man exhibition of oils, watercolors, monotypes, pen and pencil drawings at Friday Morning Club. Sells several pictures.

March–April, six week sketching and painting tour out of doors in Simi Valley, part of time with William Wendt. Returns to Los Angeles with forty pictures.

April, exhibition and sale at Friday Morning Club and at group show at John F. Kanst Art Gallery, Los Angeles.

Works with seal fishermen who bring him to the Santa Barbara (Channel) Islands where he spends summer sketching, painting, and searching for Indian artifacts.

October, exhibits at Painters Club exhibi-

tion, Blanchard Galleries, and sails for Central America with Mary Gibson. Explorer-artist, spends six months sketching, painting, taking photographs in Honduras, Guatemala, San Salvador, Nicaragua, Mexico. Survives jail, tropical fever, and shipwreck.

April, returns to California.

July, exhibits at second annual Los Angeles Painters Club Exhibition, Blanchard Gallery.

Awarded First Prize for oil, *LA PUERTA DE SANTA CLARA*, purchased by W.H. Cole.

Exhibits at Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle, Washington and awarded Blue Ribbon for oil, *THE CAPTURE OF SEALS AT PAINTED CAVE (SANTA CRUZ ISLAND)*.

Becomes founding member of California Art Club.

August 20, Phoebe Apperson Hearst invites Borg to Wyntoon, her home near Mount Shasta, telling him he will find scenes to please him. Remains until September 12, then spends two weeks at her hacienda near San Francisco. Phoebe Hearst buys several pictures and becomes his patroness.

October–December, in Los Angeles preparing for major exhibition in San Francisco.

March, completes thirty-five new oils including: *SUMMER DAY*, *STREET IN LA ANTIGUA*, *A COAST CANYON*, *LONELY HILLS*, *STREET IN TEGUCIGALPA*, *CENTRAL AMERICAN MARKET*, *ESQUINTLA*. Returns to Pleasanton. Commissioned by Mrs. Hearst to paint oil portrait of George Hearst from photograph. Portrait donated by Phoebe Hearst to University of California, Berkeley, School of Mining.

April 23–May 20, exhibits forty-two paintings at Helgesen's Gallery, 2239 Fillmore Street, San Francisco. Sells several pictures to individuals, to Helgesen's, and to Rabjom and Morcom Galleries. Mrs. Hearst purchases and donates *STREET SCENE*,

1909

1910



TEGUCIGALPA, to University of California, Berkeley.

September 14, sails for Europe with Professor Gustavus Eisen at Mrs. Hearst's expense for projected five year tour of Europe and North Africa to visit the great archeological sites, cities and museums, to study the great masters, and to develop a European reputation.

October, lives at Villa Carmona, Granada, favorite pension of John Singer Sargent. Takes photographs, sketches landscapes, people, and scenes of interest to him.

November, goes to Madrid. Studies paintings in the Prado. Admires Velasquez.

Sketches and photographs.

Charles Lummis donates collection of Indian artifacts and paintings by William Keith, Thomas Hill and Carl Oscar Borg to the Southwest Museum.

1911 January 7, goes to Tangiers. Takes photographs and sketches.

January 18, sails aboard U.S. India from Gibraltar to Egypt. Boards at Hotel Bristol, Cairo. Shuns tourists and street cars and other signs of modernism to study the past. Sketches, takes photographs, collects artifacts.

February–March, explores upper Egypt: Luxor, Valley of the Kings, Edfu, Assuan, Philae. Sketches, takes photographs. Egyptian soothsayer in Luxor predicts he will marry twice and, when he is old, his native country will present him with a medal.

April, returns to Cairo. Sails from Alexandria aboard *Persia* for Naples, Italy. Rents studio at 33 Via Margutta, Rome, later occupied by Vanessa Bell.

March–December, period of intensive studio work in Rome preparing for spring exhibitions. Paints scenes of Spain, Tangiers, Egypt, including major oils:

FELLAHIN WOMEN OF UPPER EGYPT;  
EGYPTIAN EVENING, LUXOR; HILLS OF

MOKATTAM. Also visits and paints Roman ruins, churches, countryside. Studies the Renaissance masters. Admires work of contemporaries: Arnold Böcklin, Alfred East, Beppi Giraldi.

1912 January 25, Borg sends fifteen large landscapes to exhibitions in European capitals. Eisen reports to Mrs. Hearst that "Egypt inspired him in particular and developed his sense of color."

March 2, writes progress report to Mrs. Hearst: two pictures accepted at Imperial Academy's spring exhibition in St. Petersburg; six at Internationale Kunst Ausstellung, Amsterdam; two in Venice's tenth Esposizone Internazionale di Belle Arti. Exhausted after period of intensive work, spends as much time as possible out of doors. April, exhibits two oils, landscapes, Via Nazionale, Rome.

April 17, arrives Venice. Visits exhibition, sketches, executes pastels of Venetian scenes.

April 28, arrives Paris.

April 30–July 1, exhibits at Salon des Artistes Français, Grand Palais des Champs Elysée. Attends opening which he finds disappointing: "Too many poor pictures by old fossils."

March–August, sketches in France, Belgium and Switzerland.

September, returns to Paris, rents room at 29 Rue des Saint Pères. Settles in for two year stay determined to establish a reputation in Paris.

Buys printing press and after several unsuccessful attempts completes his first successful plate, THE TEMPLE OF LUXOR. Exhibits at Salon d'Automne. Tries to withdraw his picture when he sees modernist paintings which dominate exhibition.

Buys collection of engravings, many by Dürer, whom he admires, at Hotel Drouot.

- Sends Dürer's THE LABORS OF HERCULES to William Wendt as Christmas present. Also sends watercolors, scenes of Rome and surrounding countryside, for Wendt to exhibit in Los Angeles.
- December 25, writes in his diary: "The loneliest Christmas I have ever had."
- 1913 January–February, establishes European reputation through major one man exhibition of approximately one hundred paintings at Jules Gautier Gallery, 19 Rue de Sèvres, Paris; scenes from California, Central America, Spain, Egypt, Italy and France.
- April, exhibits two pictures in Ghent.
- May 5–August 16, exhibits three oils: EL CERRO, COAST CANYON, and ISLAND OF SANTA CRUZ at the Royal Academy, London.
- Exhibits oils, UN VILLAGE EGYPTIEN, LES COLLINES DE MOKATTAM and UN JOUR D'ETE (CÔTES DU PACIFIQUE) at Salon des Artistes Français, Paris.
- Exhibits in group exhibition in Vichy, awarded Honorable Mention.
- June, William Wendt exhibits Borg's European watercolors at his studio on North Sichel Street, Los Angeles.
- September, watercolors, including ST. PETERS; SOUVENIR FROM THE FORUM; TEMPLE OF CASTOR AND POLLUX; ROMAN FORUM; VILLA, TIVOLI, exhibited in group show with William Wendt, Granville Redmond, and E.A. Burbank at the new Hotel Alexandria Galleries, Los Angeles.
- December, exhibits EGYPTIAN EVENING (shown earlier in year at Paris Salon) California Art Club exhibition, Los Angeles.
- 1914 April–July, exhibits in group exhibitions at the Exposition Internationale Aix-les-Bains; at the Société des Amis des Arts de Seine-et-Oise, Versaille, where he is awarded a silver medal; at Les Orientalistes in Paris; at the Salon des Artistes Français (April 13–June 30) where he exhibits oils including NORMANDY CASTLE AT NIGHT, and two Spanish scenes; and at the Exposition Nationale and Coloniale d'Arts Appliqués et Décoratifs, Palais des Fêtes de Paris, 199 rue St. Martin (July 2–July 31).
- July 28, writes: "There is going to be a general European conflict."
- August 30, sees refugees streaming into Paris and German airplanes bombing the city.
- September, watercolor, QUO VADIS, ROME, exhibited thumb-box paintings, Royar Gallery, Los Angeles.
- October 10, sails from Le Havre aboard *The Tourraine* bound for New York.
- Exhibits oil, LA COMPAGNA ASCOLATA, California Art Club, Los Angeles.
- November, lives at Salmagundi Club, New York.
- Exhibits thirty-eight watercolors of North African and European scenes at Arthur H. Hahlo & Co. Galleries, 569 Fifth Avenue, New York.
- December 12, arrives in San Francisco. Visits Phoebe Hearst.
- 1915 January, visits friends in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. Returns to San Francisco. Establishes studio on Post Street and gives painting classes. Divides his time between his studio and Mrs. Hearst's estates. Mrs. Hearst buys three paintings including a large oil, CAIRO, which she donates to the Hearst Free Library, Anaconda, Montana.
- February 20–December 4, exhibits four etchings and two oils, LE CHATEAU GAILLARD and CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE, at the Palace of Fine Arts, Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco. Awarded Silver Medal.
- Associates with artists working through Helgesen's Gallery: Clarence Hinkle, Gattardo Piazonni, Granville Redmond, Armin Hansen.



- Elected member The San Francisco Society of Artists, 1373 Post Street.  
Becomes member San Francisco Society of Etchers.  
Exhibits in San Diego Exposition at Fine Arts Gallery. Awarded Silver Medal.  
Exhibits three pictures California Art Club, Los Angeles: AN EGYPTIAN EVENING, THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, THE COLOSSI OF MEMNON.
- 1916 May 3, auction of ninety-three pictures at Curtis Studio, 314-324 Sutter Street, San Francisco, scenes from Europe, North Africa, Central America, California.  
Exhibits Fine Arts Gallery, San Diego.  
Awarded gold medal.  
June-September, first visits to Hopi and Navajo country in Arizona and New Mexico. Through Mrs. Hearst's influence, commissioned by University of California, Berkeley, and United States Bureau of Ethnology to paint and photograph the Hopi and Navajo. Visits and paints Grand Canyon. Has epiphany in the Indian country where he "hear[s] the music of the all, uncontradicted sublime," and returns annually from 1916 until 1932.  
Awarded first prize for oil, SUMMER AFTERNOON, Arizona State Fair, Phoenix.  
Hanson Puthuff member of the jury of awards.  
Visits friends and paints in Santa Barbara. Completes Grand Canyon oil which he sends to Charles A. Brant, Manager El Tovar Hotel, Grand Canyon.  
December 27, receives letter from Brant: "Mr. [Thomas] Moran stated to me in the hearing of a dozen others that he considered you pre-eminently the highest grade of any artist in America today."
- 1917 February 27, one man exhibition, "Land of the Hopi and the Navajo," gouache sketches painted *en plein air*, opens at Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco.
- March 4, Mrs. Rose Berry, chair, Fine Arts Division, General Federation of Women's Clubs, lectures to large audience at Palace of Fine Arts: "Carl Oscar Borg, an Appreciation."  
Mrs. Hearst commissions three gouaches of Indian scenes and donates them to the University of California, Berkeley, Lowie Museum of Anthropology.  
Exhibits oil, EVENING IN A HOPI VILLAGE, spring exhibition, California Art Club, Los Angeles.  
July 1-31, one man exhibition of thirty-eight watercolors including: WALPI, HOPI POTTER, SHIPALLOVI, THE CORN ROCK (MUSH-GONGNOVI), AT A HOPI SHRINE, DESERT HEAT, KEAM'S CANYON, BELOW THE FIRST MESA, ORAIBI, KIVAS AT SHUMOPAVI, at Museum of History, Science and Art, Exposition Park, Los Angeles.  
Visits Santa Barbara. Purchases property on Loma Alta. Beginning of friendship with Thomas Moran and his daughter, Ruth.  
Returns to San Francisco. Becomes engaged to Madeline Carriel.
- 1918 February-April, living and painting in San Francisco and at Mrs. Hearst's Hacienda del Pozo de Verona, Pleasanton. Mrs. Hearst purchases oils; THE HOPI SNAKE DANCE, MISHOGONOU, and THE NIMAN KACHINA DANCERS and donates them to the University of California, Berkeley, Department of Anthropology.  
April, exhibits oils: KIVAS AT HANO and FESTIVAL IN HOPI LAND, California Art Club. Wins second Clarence A. Black prize of \$50 for best picture in the non-landscape category.  
May, moves to Santa Barbara, begins building home and studio on the Mesa.  
August 15, marries Madeline Carriel.  
Exhibits oil, ORAIBI, A CITY OF THE PAINTED DESERT, winter exhibition,

- California Art Club.
- 1919 John Collier, who becomes Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933, visits Borg in Santa Barbara. Collier credits Borg with providing "the first convincing contact with [the] Indian spirit."  
 April 13, Phoebe Hearst dies.  
 May 16–31, one man exhibition of oil paintings including: LAND OF THE NAVAJO, GUARDIAN OF THE TRAIL, SU-PE-LA, A BIT OF OLD ZUNI, THE DRY WATER HOLE, DESERT EVENING, HOPI WOMEN, CANYON DEL MUERTO at Museum of History, Science and Art, Exposition Park, Los Angeles.  
 June–July, one man exhibition twenty watercolors of desert and Indian life, Fine Art Building, San Diego Museum, Balboa Park.  
 Santa Fe Railroad commissions oil, THE NIMAN KACHINAS.  
 Exhibits oils, THE RED BUTTE and SOLITUDE, winter exhibition, California Art Club.
- 1920 February, one man exhibition, oils and watercolors, Cannell and Chaffin Gallery, 720 W. Seventh St., Los Angeles.  
 Exhibits oil, DESERT EVENING, 1st annual group exhibition, Painters and Sculptors of Southern California, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.  
 Awarded silver medal at group exhibition, Salon des Artistes Français, Paris.  
 Begins five year association with newly formed Santa Barbara School of the Arts founded by Fernand Lungren. Teaches the Outdoor Painting and Sketching Class.  
 October 7–November 15, exhibits oils, DESERT TRAILS and THE LONE RIDER, eleventh annual exhibition, California Art Club, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles. THE LONE RIDER wins Mabury purchase award.
- 1921 Becomes one of fourteen founding members including Dana Bartlett, Hanson Puthuff, William Ritschel, Birger Sandzen, Marian Wachtel, Karl Yens, Max Wieczorek, of California Water Color Society. Exhibits six watercolors including BREWING THE SACRED MEDICINE and THE RANGE RIDER in California Water Color Society's First Annual Exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.  
 April, exhibits twenty Indian pictures, including oil: HOPI WOMAN FIRING POTTERY, (NAMPEYO), and gouache: OLD WALPI, EVENING OF THE FIESTA, THE RED BUTTE, at Stendahl gallery, Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles.  
 April 7–May 13, exhibits watercolor, CANYON DEL MUERTO 2nd annual Painters and Sculptors exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.  
 Exhibits two oils: THE RAINMAKER and CASTLES OF THE GODS, California Art Club winter exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.  
 November 15–December 11, exhibits twenty gouache sketches, primarily Indian scenes, including ENTRANCE OF CANYON DE CHELLY, THE DESERT, AN ARIZONA CANYON, LAND OF THE NAVAJO, OLD ADOBE (SANTA BARBARA) with paintings by Bessie Ella Hazen, De Witt Parshall N.A., and Douglas Parshall, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- 1922 February 9, exhibits NAVAJO at annual exhibition and auction, Salmagundi Club, New York.  
 Exhibits oil, THE GRAND CANYON. Painters and Sculptors annual exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.  
 Exhibits three pictures, A GATE OF TANGIERS, THE THREE CHIEFS, A STRONGHOLD OF THE DESERT, second annual exhibition California Water Color Society.  
 July–August, exhibits three oil paintings and five watercolors, exhibition of Southern California artists, Orr's Art Galleries,



*Carl Oscar Borg. After a summer on the desert in Hopi and Navajo country, ca. 1922. Photography by W. Edwin Gledhill, courtesy of Helen Laird.*

Los Angeles.

Exhibits two oils, WATCHING THE RACE and CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE, winter exhibition, California Art Club.

Exhibits oil, THE RAINMAKERS, at Western Painters exhibition of selected works by western museum curators.

One man exhibition of oils, watercolors and woodblock prints, Santa Barbara School of the Arts gallery.

December 2–January 1, one man exhibition of Indian pictures including: IN THE GREAT SILENCE, THE LONELY TRAIL, A HOPI SHRINE, THE NAVAJO HORSEMAN, and a California landscape, SPRINGTIME, at John F. Kanst Gallery, Los Angeles.

Executes series of woodblock prints of Hopi and Navajo subjects.

March, exhibits thirty pictures at the Santa Barbara School of the Arts Gallery.

April, *American Magazine of Art* reports his Scandinavian facility with wood working tools, and his striking block prints of Pueblo Indian subjects.

Exhibits five watercolors: AT THE WATERING TROUGH, IN A DESERT CANYON, UNDER THE CLIFFS OF ACOMA, NAVAJO, PREPARING FOR THE FIESTA annual exhibition California Water Color Society. Awarded Honorable Mention.

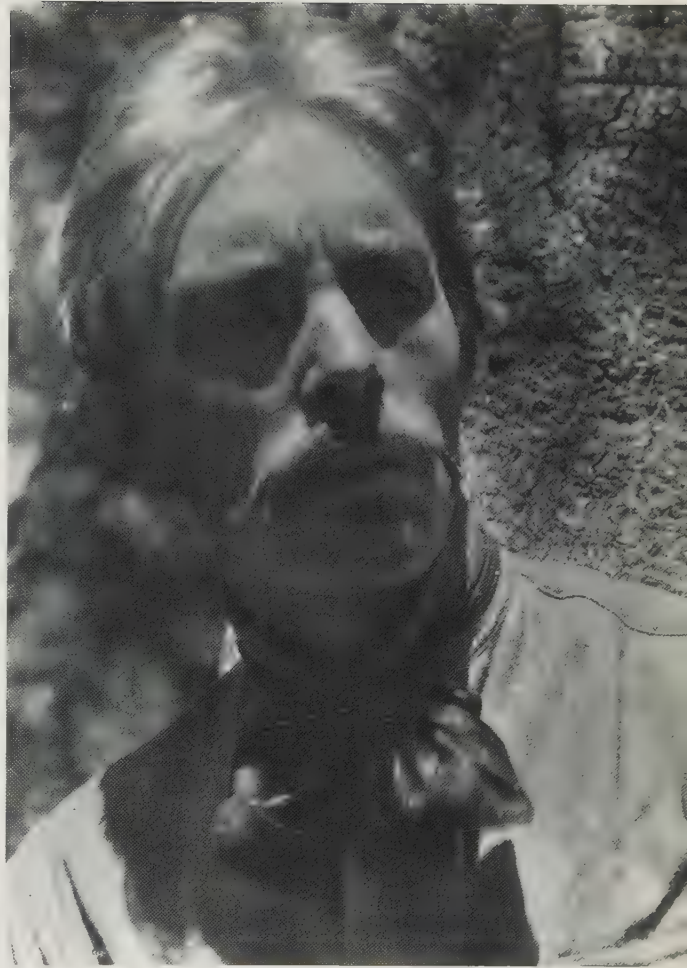
August, collects money in Santa Barbara for the Indian Welfare League.

Exhibits oil, A CITY OF THE PAINTED DESERT (ORAIBI), Western Painters exhibition.

Exhibits oil, CLOUDS OF FIRE, Painters and Sculptors exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.

October, exhibits group exhibition California Water Color Society, San Diego Museum.

November–December, exhibits oils, IN RAMONA'S COUNTRY and THE HORSE PASTURE, California Art Club exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art,



Los Angeles. Awarded the Mrs. H.E. Huntington Prize for best landscape. Paints Thomas Moran's portrait and presents oil, MEDICINE MAN and an accompanying poem to Ruth Moran. Exhibits four watercolors including THE CRIPPLE (HOPI) and NAVAJO SHEPHERD, California Water Color Society exhibition.

1924

1923

- Exhibits oil, HOPI VILLAGE (MISHOGONOV), Painters and Sculptors exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles. Painting, sketching trips with friend and neighbor, Ed Borein.
- March 12–26, exhibits group exhibition, Biltmore Salon.
- Exhibits GOLDEN HILLS, California Art Club annual winter exhibition.
- Sells home in Santa Barbara and moves to 1339 North Hobart Avenue, Hollywood.
- Becomes founding member along with Frank Tenney Johnson, Jack Wilkinson Smith, Edgar Payne and others of Painters of the West, a painters' club patterned after the Salmagundi Club, New York.
- May–July, exhibits oil, THE BADLANDS, ARIZONA, first exhibition of the Painters of the West, Biltmore Salon, Los Angeles. Awarded silver medal.
- 1925 January–February, exhibition of pen and pencil drawings and water color sketches at Los Angeles Public Library.
- Becomes director of the out of door classes in landscape studies, California Art Institute, Los Angeles, and gives classes to advanced students.
- March, exhibition of Arizona and California pictures at the Stendahl Galleries, and one man exhibition: *Paintings by Carl O. Borg*, at Biltmore Salon.
- March 28–April 7, one man exhibition of gouache, watercolors and oils, Santa Barbara School of the Arts Galleries.
- Becomes founding member along with Christian Van Schneidau of the American Scandinavian Art Society of the West.
- Exhibits watercolors, MYSTIC LAND and WESTERN HILL, California Water Color Society, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- Exhibits oil, A KNIGHT OF THE WEST, Painters of the West second annual exhibition, Biltmore Salon.
- Exhibits oil, SHEPHERDS OF THE WASTE-LANDS, Painters and Sculptors exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- Exhibits oil, THE PROSPECTOR, California Art Club exhibition at the Friday Morning Club.
- November 24, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles, opens new galleries with Pan-American exhibition. Director, Dr. William Alanson Bryan photographed for *Los Angeles Herald* standing beside Borg's FESTIVAL IN HOPI LAND, a 52" x 60" oil, considered "one of the finest Indian paintings in America."
- Beginning of five year association with the movie industry. Employed as art director for Douglas Fairbanks and Sam Goldwyn. Paints hundreds of watercolors detailing costumes, props, backgrounds for *The Black Pirate*, *The Winning of Barbara Worth*, *Night of Love*, *The Gaucho*, *Flower of Spain*, *The Viking* and *The Iron Mask*. Experiences severe eye strain.
- 1926 Exhibits ten gouache sketches, Pasadena Art Institute exhibition, Carmelita Gardens House.
- May, *Touring Topics* publishes LO, THE POOR INDIAN, five block print portraits of Navajo and Hopi.
- 1927 Exhibits three pictures including, ROCK GORGES, LITTLE COLORADO, California Water Color Society, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- March, Santa Fe Railroad uses Indian paintings (oils) by Borg and paintings of other prominent artists including Hanson Puthuff, Elmer Wachtel and Gerald Cassidy, "to enhance the dignity" of their new office on 8th and Hill Street, Los Angeles, and to capture "the interest of a large public."
- March, a major biographical essay, including five reproductions of Southwestern



Carl Oscar Borg. In his studio at North Hobart Avenue, Hollywood, California, ca. 1928. Photography courtesy of Helen Laird.



pictures, appears in *American Magazine of Art*.

Exhibits in group exhibition Laguna Beach Art Association.

Oil, LAND OF MYSTIC SHADOWS reproduced in Charles O. Middleton's portfolio edition of Western painters.

Exhibits oil, GRAND CANYON, Gardena High School exhibition of Southern Cal-

ifornia artists. Awarded purchase prize. October, collaborates with Sid Grauman in designing sets for *Argentine Nights*, a staged prologue which precedes November 4 world premier of *The Gaucho* at Grauman's Chinese Theater, Los Angeles. November, exhibits in group exhibition Ainslie Galleries, Barker Brothers, Los Angeles.

- 1928 January, exhibits oil, SANTA BARBARA HILLS, annual exhibition Painters of the West, Biltmore Salon. Awarded gold medal. Exhibits oil, THE CAMPERS, California Art Club exhibition. February, exhibition of watercolor sketches for *The Gaucho* in San Francisco. Elected member Grand Central Galleries, New York. June, exhibits watercolor sketches for *The Black Pirate*, *The Gaucho*, *The Winning of Barbara Worth*, *The Night of Love*, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. June, exhibits in group exhibition *Small Paintings by Western Artists* including Thomas Moran, Dona Schuster, Edgar Payne, Paul Lauritz at Dana Bartlett Gallery, Los Angeles. Drypoint etchings, LAND OF THE NAVAJOS and NAVAJO included in the American Collection, 9th International Print Makers Exhibition, Florence, Italy. July, awarded diploma of honor and silver medal for watercolor, Pacific Southwest Exposition, Long Beach, California. July, exhibits drypoints, HOPI WOMAN, HOPI VILLAGE, and NAVAJO, group exhibition of American prints, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. American Federation of Arts presents drypoint, NAVAJO, to the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. October, oil, GRAND CANYON, commissioned by the Automobile Club appears as cover of *Touring Topics*. November, honorary pall bearer with William Wendt and Maynard Dixon at funeral of Charles F. Lummis.
- 1929 March, exhibits in group exhibition, *Paintings by California Artists*, Bartlett Galleries, Los Angeles. March, exhibition of woodblocks and drypoints at Zeitlin's Book Shop, Los Angeles. Awarded first prize, Sacramento, California, group exhibition. November, publication in *Touring Topics* of THE PROVINCE OF TUSAYAN, a portfolio of fourteen drawings with an essay by the artist, commissioned by the Automobile Club and executed, June, 1929, during visit to the Hopi and Navajo reservations. Receives commission from the Automobile Club for series of historical paintings depicting major epochs of California's history. Awarded Elizabeth Holmes Fisher prize for best painting at Ebells Salon's first annual exhibition of Southern California oil paintings. December, exhibits Painters of the West annual exhibition, Biltmore Salon. Estranged from his wife and the materialism of a new era. Borg travels widely in the thirties in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Mexico, Montana, Utah, Idaho, New York. Stays for extended periods of time at Salmagundi Club, New York, and with friends in Palm Springs and Santa Barbara. Historical paintings commissioned by Automobile Club reproduced as monthly covers for *Touring Topics*. Begins to thin out his collections of books, autographs, antiques. Burns sixty watercolors, over one hundred drawings. October, exhibits two pictures, MEXICAN STREET and MISSION GARDEN, (SANTA INEZ), California Water Color Society. Exhibits oil, NAVAJO CAMP, Grand Central Galleries, New York. January, exhibits oils, NAVAJO TRADING POST and UNDER WESTERN SKIES at Laguna Beach Art Gallery. Founding member, Foundation of Western Art. HOPI HOUSES, WALPI selected to tour country as part of the American Foundation of Art's First International Exhibition of Etchings and Engravings. May, exhibits etchings, group exhibition of
- 1930
- 1931
- 1932



- etchings, lithographs, block prints, public library, Palos Verdes Estates, and oil, OLD ORAIBI, group exhibition of western pictures, Biltmore Salon.
- June, exhibits oil, woodblock and etchings at inaugural exhibition of western artists including E. Irving Couse, Ernest Blumenschein, Gustav Bauman, William Wendt, O.E. Berninghaus, Edgar Payne, Jessie Arms and Cornelius Botke, Ilsley Art Galleries, Los Angeles.
- Executes architectural rendering for Wallace Neff, Palm Springs home of Arthur K. Bourne.
- August, three man exhibition with Armin Hansen and Arnold Mountford at Ilsley Galleries, Los Angeles.
- Begins experimenting with colored monotypes.
- October, exhibits two watercolors, BLOWY WEATHER and COMMERCIAL DISTRICT, thirteenth annual exhibition California Water Color Society, Los Angeles.
- 1933 Exhibits two oils, EARTH AND SKY and ACOMA, California Art Club exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- Exhibits group exhibition opening of Foundation of Western Art Galleries, 627 S. Carondelet Street, Los Angeles.
- June, exhibits group exhibition landscape artists sponsored by Santa Monica Mountain's Protective Association, Los Angeles Library.
- Exhibits two watercolors, NAVAJOS (RED LAKE, ARIZ.) and OLD NAVAJO WOMAN, California Water Color Society, Los Angeles.
- Executes series of colored monotypes.
- September 1-14, exhibits oil, EVENING IN HOPI LAND, group exhibition of contemporary art, Ilsley Galleries, Ambassador Hotel.
- September 20-October, exhibits oils including THE EVENING GLOW, NAVAJO CAMP, NAVAJO FLOCK AND NAVAJO VISITORS in two man exhibition with William Ritschel, Ilsley Galleries, Ambassador Hotel.
- November, exhibits in two man exhibition with William Ritschel, Faulkner Memorial Gallery, Santa Barbara.
- November 11-December 31, exhibits group exhibition, California Art Club, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- 1934 March, exhibits with Alson Clark, Otto Schneider, Paul Lauritz, Pasadena Art Institute group exhibition, Carmelita Gardens.
- April 8, cited in *Los Angeles Times* as one of Southern California's four major bookplate artists.
- June, exhibits oil, NAVAJO STRONGHOLD, first all California exhibition of representational artists, Los Angeles Art Association, Biltmore Salon.
- Exhibits oil, MONTEREY CYPRESS, Painters and Sculptors annual exhibition, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- Goes to New York. Lives at Salmagundi Club. Thinks art center of country may have shifted from the West to the East, but concludes art market now manipulated by commercial interests and easterners not interested in California. Depressed, returns to Sweden in June. Spends summer visiting family and friends, studying pictures in the museums, sketching Swedish scenes.
- July-August, exhibits with Elmer Wachtel, J. Bond Francisco, Hanson Puthuff, Frank Tenney Johnson, Maynard Dixon, Armin Hansen and others, group exhibition Foundation of Western Art Galleries, S. Carondelet Street, Los Angeles.
- September, returns to America. Lives at Salmagundi Club. Exhibits drypoint, DESERT SHADOWS, group exhibition California prints, Foundation of Western Art.

- November 5–December 2, one man exhibition of fifty drypoints, Division of Graphic Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.
- December, exhibition of graphics at Grand Central Galleries, New York.
- Founding member of Los Angeles based Academy of Western Art formed “to do for Western artists what the National Academy does for Eastern artists and to support exhibitions of traditional pictures.”
- December 26, meets with board of Academy of Western Art in his studio, 1339 N. Hobart Ave., to complete arrangements for opening of major exhibition.
- 1935 January, exhibits oil, SUMMERSTORM, ARIZONA, first annual exhibition, Academy of Western Artists, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles. Member of jury that awards first prize to Nicolai Fechin for SUMMER.
- March, awarded honorable mention Laguna Beach Artists’ Association.
- April–May, retrospective exhibition at Biltmore Salon.
- Exhibits oil, CASTLE OF THE GODS, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- May 14, completes full editions of five drypoints.
- May, asks Madeline for a divorce. Legal separation and division of property. Moves back to Santa Barbara and rents the house he had built on the Mesa.
- June 15–July 15, exhibits desert and Indian paintings, second annual exhibition of Foundation of Western Art, Foundation of Western Art Galleries.
- September, exhibits Foundation of Western Art group exhibition of California prints.
- November–December, one man exhibition of colored monotypes at Biltmore Salon.
- 1936 January–April, resides and works in Santa Barbara.
- January, exhibits oil, NAVAJO GRAVE, at second annual exhibition, Academy of Western Artists, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles. Awarded second honorable mention.
- February 23–March 25, exhibits NAVAJO CAMP, Foundation of Western Art annual exhibition of California watercolors.
- March, prepares to return to Sweden. Gives collection of pictures, autographs and books to American-Swedish Historical Museum, Philadelphia.
- April, publication of *The Great Southwest*, collection of etchings and poems by Carl Oscar Borg with forewords by Leila Mechlin, Gustavus Eisen and Everett C. Maxwell.
- Publication by Automobile Club of *Sword, Fire and Gold Pan* with Borg’s illustrations of major events in California’s history.
- April, one man exhibition at Grand Central Galleries, New York.
- May, exhibits oil, CASTLE OF THE GODS, Painters and Sculptors Club, Los Angeles Museum. Goes to New York. Stays at Salmagundi Club. Exhibits drypoints at Vose Galleries, Boston.
- July, sails for Sweden. Spends summer travelling through Scandinavia. Spends autumn and winter in Gothenburg. Exhibits watercolors, etchings and woodblocks at Utlandssvenska Museum, Gothenburg. Donates watercolors and etchings to the Gothenburg Ethnological Museum. Meets Lilly Lindstrand.
- 1937 Exhibits oil, CHIN-LEE VALLEY, Academy of Western Painters, Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles.
- March, engaged to Lilly Lindstrand.
- April 15, sails for American to settle his affairs. Arrives in New York and lives at Salmagundi Club. Receives commission for two oils from Santa Fe Railroad.
- August, returns to Los Angeles. Presses



Carl Oscar Borg. Gothenberg, Sweden.  
1945. Photography courtesy of Helen  
Laird.

Madeline to complete divorce proceedings.  
August, exhibition of oils and etchings at  
L.D.M. Sweat Memorial Art Museum,  
Portland, Maine.  
September, in Santa Barbara.  
October, agrees to work for one month as  
art advisor for Cecil B. DeMille who is  
completing *The Buccaneer*.

November 3, leaves California for New  
York. Lives at Salmagundi Club until June,  
1938.

November 21–December 12, exhibits in  
group Thumb Box Exhibition, Salmagundi  
Club.

1938 February 13–March 4, exhibits OLD ORAIBI  
at Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings and  
Sculpture, Salmagundi Club. Reviewer  
notes exhibition “disdains gaudiness.”

March, exhibits oil, MEETING OF THE  
NAVAJOS, at the Academy of Western Art-  
ists exhibition, Los Angeles Museum.

March, exhibits oil, SUMMER STORM ARIZONA, at the National Academy. Elected  
Associate Member.

June 3, sails for Sweden.

October 3, marries Lilly Lindstrand in  
Copenhagen, Denmark. Settles in Gothen-  
burg. Joins newly formed Dalsland art  
club.

1939 March, exhibits with Dalsland artists in  
Mellerud.

May, one man exhibition of sixty-three  
watercolors, oils, gouaches, etchings and  
monotypes at Gummesson's Gallery,  
Strandvägen 17, Stockholm.

1940–1944 Lives in Gothenburg. Paints portraits,  
Swedish scenes, major historical painting:  
DALABORGS FORSTÖRING; exhibits with  
Dalsland artists in small local exhibitions;  
executes large number of bookplates; illus-  
trates Christmas magazines; misses the  
Indians and “all the beautiful things [in] the  
great southland,” but war blocks him in  
Sweden and he cannot return. Paints In-



dian pictures. Gets “American magazines  
from the Consulate once in a while and just  
about read[s] them to pieces.” Cannot toler-  
ate the climate, is often seriously ill.

1945 June, donates major collection of Indian  
baskets, jewelry, blankets and pottery to  
National Ethnological Museum, Stock-  
holm. Awarded prestigious Linné Silver  
Medal by Royal Academy of Science,  
Stockholm.

Sept. 12, sails for America. Spends a  
month in New York and returns to Califor-  
nia. Visits friends in Los Angeles and goes  
back to Santa Barbara.

December, struck by automobile while  
crossing street in Santa Barbara and  
hóspitalized.

1946 Purchases home at 226 East Padre Street,  
Santa Barbara.

Paints Western scenes from card file of  
sketches.

1947 Health poor, suffers from pleurisy and  
weak heart. Begins to write his  
autobiography.

April 10, writes old friend Eva Lummis  
Dekalb to tell her he cannot go on.

May 8, dies suddenly of cardiac arrest.

Helen Laird





LAND OF THE NAVAJO (CANYON DE  
CHELLY).

*drypoint etching*

10 x 12½ inches

*Collection of Helen and David Laird*

*Photography by Stan Carstensen*

ANTELOPE RUINS, CANYON DE  
CHELLY.

*drypoint etching*

8 x 10 inches

*Private Collection*

*Photography by Stan Carstensen*

ON THE RIM, GRAND CANYON. 1932

*drypoint etching*

12<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 12 inches

*Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift*



CHIEF'S HOUSE, HOPI HOUSE  
(SHUMPOVI).  
drypoint etching  
10<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches  
Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift

KIVAS OF HANO, ARIZONA. 1933  
drypoint etching  
10 x 9 inches  
Collection of Helen and David Laird

DESERT STORM.  
woodcut  
9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift







NAVAJO MEDICINE MAN. 1925  
*drypoint etching*  
10 x 8 inches  
Private Collection  
Photography by Stan Carstensen

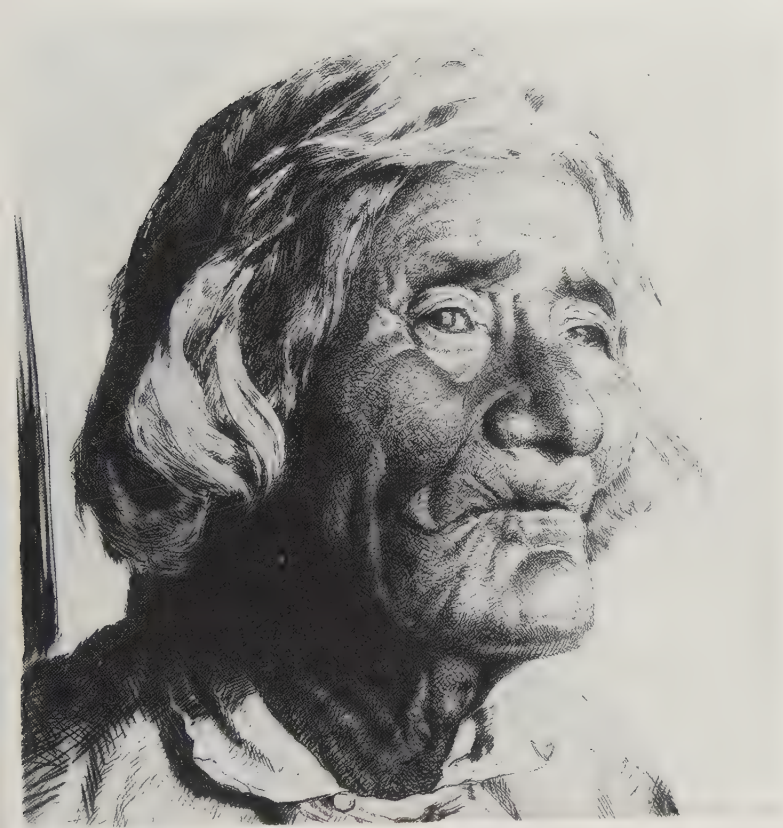


CAPTAIN NAVAJO.  
*drypoint etching*  
10 x 8 inches  
Collection of Helen and David Laird  
Photography by Stan Carstensen





HOPI PATRIARCH.  
*drypoint etching*  
8 x 7½ inches  
Katherine H. Haley Collection



HOPI—HARRY SU-PE-LA, CHIEF OF  
SNAKE CLAN.  
*drypoint etching*  
6½ x 5 inches  
Katherine H. Haley Collection



THE NAWAJO.  
*drypoint etching*  
6 x 6 inches  
Katherine H. Haley Collection



HOPÍ KACHINA PRIEST.  
*drypoint etching*  
10 x 8 inches  
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. A.P. Hays





THE NIMAN KACHINAS.

etching

10 x 10 inches

Private Collection

Photography by Stan Carstensen



ON THE WALPI TRAIL.

drypoint etching

10 3/4 x 7 1/2 inches

Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift



SA-LA-KO.

woodcut

10 x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Private Collection

Photography by Stan Carstensen



NAVAJO CHIEF. 1923

woodcut

9 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Katherine H. Haley Collection





HOPI MEDICINE MAN, 1923

woodcut

10 x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Collection of Helen and David Laird

Photography by Stan Carstensen



HOPI SNAKE PRIEST, ca. 1923

woodcut

8 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 10 inches

Collection of Marlene and Werner Schulz



PORTRAIT OF SA-LA-KO, AN AGED

HOPI AT WALPI. ca. 1917

*watercolor on paper*

12 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Collection of Lowie Museum of An-  
thropology, University of California,  
Berkeley





## Catalog of the Exhibition

### PAINTINGS

CANYON DE CHELLY

*gouache*

19½ x 23 inches

*Eugene B. Adkins Collection*

Page 25

CANYON DE CHELLY. 1917

*oil on canvas*

49 x 40 inches

*Courtesy of Mongerson Wunderlich Galleries, Chicago*

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CANYON DE CHELLY. 1929

*watercolor*

18 x 12 inches

*Collection of*

*Mr. and Mrs. W.R. Hilligoss*

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DANCE AT WALPI, ARIZONA 1918

*oil on canvas*

25 x 30 inches

*The Los Angeles Athletic Club Collection*

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DAY OF THE FIESTA, ORAIBI.

*oil on board*

13½ x 13½ inches

*Eugene B. Adkins Collection*

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DESERT SHADOWS. 1925

*oil on canvas*

36¼ x 40 inches

*Collection of Charles and Julie Coffman*

Page 4

DESERT STORM, ARIZONA.

*oil on canvas*

36 x 40 inches

*Collection of Museum of Western Art, Denver*

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EVENING GLOW, ARIZONA. *ca.* 1930

*oil on canvas*

25 x 30 inches

*Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Healey*

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EVENING IN CANYON DE CHELLY.

*ca.* 1935

*oil on canvas*

20 x 16 inches

*The Bischoff Collection*

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EVENING SONG (NAVAJO). *ca.* 1932

*oil on canvas board*

16 x 20 inches

*Collection of James L. Coran and*

*Walter A. Nelson-Rees*

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THE GLORY OF THE GORGE.

*gouache*

19 x 13¼ inches

*Katherine H. Haley Collection*

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GRAND CANYON.

*oil on canvas*

40 x 30½ inches

*Collection of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of Mrs. Martin O. Elmborg*

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THE GRAND CANYON. 1927

*oil on canvas*

30 x 34 inches

*Gardena High School Art Collection, California*

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GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK.

1924

*oil on canvas*

33 x 45 inches

*Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art*

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GRAND CANYON OF ARIZONA. 1917

*oil on canvas*

42 x 32 inches

*Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art*

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THE GREAT RIVER, GRAND CANYON.

1932

*oil on canvas*

24½ x 20½ inches

*Collection of Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, California, Gift of Lilly Borg Elmer*

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HERMIT CAMP, GRAND CANYON. 1917

*oil on canvas*

40 x 30 inches

*Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art*

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HOPI ANGA KACHINA DANCERS,

MOENCOPI, SUMMER VILLAGE OF

ORAIBI, ARIZONA. 1917

*watercolor on paper*

13½ x 19½ inches

*Collection of Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley*

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HOPI ANGA KACHINA DANCER,

MOENCOPI, SUMMER VILLAGE OF

ORAIBI, ARIZONA. 1917

*watercolor on paper*

19¼ x 12¼ inches

*Collection of Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley*

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HOPI CITY IN PAINTED DESERT.

*ca.* 1920

*oil on canvas*

20 x 16 inches

*Elisabeth Waldo-Dentzel Collection*

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HOPI POTTER, NAMPEJO. 1920  
*oil on canvas*  
15 x 18 inches  
*Collection of Jess LaDow*  
Page 20

HOPI SHRINE. 1916  
*watercolor*  
7<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches  
*Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
Horace C. Henry Collection,  
University of Washington, Seattle*  
Page 50

HOTAVILLA, ARIZONA. 1916<sup>2</sup>  
*watercolor*  
6<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 9<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches  
*Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
Horace C. Henry Collection,  
University of Washington, Seattle*  
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THE HUSH OF EVENING. ca. 1925  
*tempera*  
34 x 30 inches  
*Collection of Mr. and Mrs. A.P. Hays*  
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INDIAN BATHER.  
*oil on canvas*  
16 x 20 inches  
*Collection of C.M. Russell Museum,  
Great Falls, Montana*  
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IN THE CATTLE COUNTRY (NAVAJO  
COUNTRY).  
*oil on canvas*  
25 x 30 inches  
*Collection of Santa Barbara Historical  
Society, California*  
Page 23

IN WALPI, ARIZONA (or GRAY DAY,  
WALPI, ARIZONA). ca. 1934  
*oil on canvas*  
26 x 30 inches  
*The Buck Collection, Laguna Niguel,  
California*  
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KEAM'S CANYON.  
*watercolor*  
9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
Horace C. Henry Collection,  
University of Washington, Seattle*  
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LAND OF THE NAVAJOS.  
*oil on canvas*  
27<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 39<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Katherine H. Haley Collection*  
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THE LONE RIDER. 1919  
*oil on canvas*  
18 x 24 inches  
*Collection of Helen and David Laird*  
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NAVAJO BLANKET WEAVER.  
*watercolor*  
11<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 8<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches  
*Collection of Henry Art Gallery,  
Horace C. Henry Collection,  
University of Washington, Seattle*  
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NAVAJO HERDING WILD HORSES.  
*gouache*  
15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 19<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches  
*Katherine H. Haley Collection*  
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NAVAJO HORSEMEN IN CHIN-LEE  
VALLEY.  
*oil on canvas*  
35<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 51<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
*Collection of Santa Barbara Historical  
Society, California*  
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NAVAJO MEDICINE MAN.  
*gouache*  
19<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Eugene B. Adkins Collection*  
Page 27

NAVAJOS AT RIO GRANDE. 1931  
*gouache*  
14 x 19<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Collection of Helen and David Laird*  
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THE NIMAN KACHINAS. 1926  
*oil on canvas*  
47 x 54 inches  
*The Anschutz Collection*  
Cover

THE PAINTED DESERT.  
*oil on canvas*  
15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 19<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches  
*Katherine H. Haley Collection*  
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PORTRAIT OF SA-LA-KO, AN AGED  
HOPI AT WALPI. ca. 1917  
*watercolor on paper*  
12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches

*Collection of Lowie Museum of An-  
thropology, University of California,  
Berkeley*  
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PUEBLOS. 1916  
*oil on canvas*  
16 x 20 inches  
*National Cowboy Hall of Fame  
Collection, Oklahoma City*  
Page 13

RACING NAVAJOS. ca. 1920  
*oil on canvas*  
20 x 24 inches  
*Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William P.  
Healey*  
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THE RAINMAKERS. 1928  
*oil on canvas*  
40 x 38 inches  
*Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E.  
McKee, III*  
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SACRED MEDICINE.  
*oil on canvas*  
20 x 24 inches  
*Collection of the West Texas Museum  
Association, Museum of Texas Tech  
University, Lubbock, Gift of  
Mrs. H.S. Griffin*  
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SNAKE DANCERS AT ORAIBI.  
*oil on canvas*  
32 x 39 inches  
*Collection of Valley National Bank,  
Phoenix*  
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STEPS TO ACOMA.  
*watercolor on paper*  
18<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
*Eugene B. Adkins Collection*  
Page 1

STRONGHOLD OF THE HOPI.  
*watercolor on paper*  
19<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 16 inches  
*Collection of Panhandle-Plains Histor-  
ical Museum, Canyon, Texas,  
Gift of Mrs. H.S. Griffin*  
Page 45

SUMMER STORM, ARIZONA. 1934  
*oil on canvas*  
36<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 40<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
*Collection of Helen and David Laird*  
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SUNSET CANYON DE CHELLY. 1916  
*oil on canvas*  
40 x 30 inches  
*Santa Fe Collection of Southwestern Art*  
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## ETCHINGS AND WOODCUTS

ANTELOPE RUINS, CANYON DE  
CHELLY.

*drypoint etching*  
8 x 10 inches  
*Private Collection*  
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CAPTAIN NAVAJO.

*drypoint etching*  
10 x 8 inches  
*Collection of Helen and David Laird*  
Page 70

CHIEF'S HOUSE, HOPI HOUSE  
(SHUMOPOVI).

*drypoint etching*  
10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches  
*Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift*  
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DESERT STORM.

*woodcut*  
9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
*Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift*  
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HOPI—HARRY SU-PE-LA, CHIEF OF  
SNAKE CLAN.

*drypoint etching*  
6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 5 inches  
*Katherine H. Haley Collection*  
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HOPI KACHINA PRIEST.

*drypoint etching*  
10 x 8 inches  
*Collection of Mr. and Mrs. A.P. Hays*  
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HOPI MEDICINE MAN. 1923

*woodcut*  
10 x 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
*Collection of Helen and David Laird*  
Page 75

HOPI PATRIARCH.

*drypoint etching*  
8 x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Katherine H. Haley Collection*  
Page 71

HOPI SNAKE PRIEST. ca. 1923

*woodcut*  
8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 10 inches  
*Collection of Marlene and Werner Schulz*  
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KIVAS OF HANO, ARIZONA. 1933

*drypoint etching*  
10 x 9 inches  
*Collection of Helen and David Laird*  
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LAND OF THE NAVAJO (CANYON DE  
CHELLY).

*drypoint etching*  
10 x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Collection of Helen and David Laird*  
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THE NAVAJO.

*drypoint etching*  
6 x 6 inches  
*Katherine H. Haley Collection*  
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NAVAJO CHIEF. 1923

*woodcut*  
9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Katherine H. Haley Collection*  
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NAVAJO MEDICINE MAN. 1925

*drypoint etching*  
10 x 8 inches  
*Private Collection*  
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THE NIMAN KACHINAS.

*etching*  
10 x 10 inches  
*Private Collection*  
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ON THE RIM, GRAND CANYON. 1932

*drypoint etching*  
12<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 12 inches  
*Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift*  
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ON THE WALPI TRAIL.

*drypoint etching*  
10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches  
*Collection of Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, California, Anonymous Gift*  
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SA-LA-KO.

*woodcut*  
10 x 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches  
*Private Collection*  
Page 74

## Palm Springs Desert Museum

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